MARY LYON
Through Her Letters

MARION LANSING

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Although this is the story of the founder of what is now Mount Holyoke College, who was also one of the most influential workers in the inception of Wheaton College, it does not belong to a single school or college but to all who share in the inheritance from this pioneer period in the education of women.

Edited with brisk and informative running commentary which fills in the background of the middle 1800's, these letters give a vivid, personal picture of the social life of the period, of the other educational enterprises of such women as Emma Willard, Catharine Beecher, and Zilpah Grant, and of the gradual evolution in Miss Lyon's own mind of the conviction that women's education would never come into its own until it was established on the same basis of public endowment and permanent foundation as the men's colleges.

SEP 26 1961

Here is the epic of the founding of a pioneer woman's college, the raising of thirty to forty thousand dollars from New England business men and farmers in the years preceding the panic of 1837, and the actual erection of the first building of what has since become one of the country's foremost colleges. Here, also, is the fascinating story of the woman who founded that college—and left an enduring influence on the education of all time.

MARY LYON

A portrait from early portraits, by Louisa Jewett

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Mary Lyon
Through Her Letters

As edited by

MARION LANSING

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"For those who in years past dreamed a dream, and toiled for its fulfilment; who laid lasting foundations, and built well upon them; who gave unstintingly of strength and love and labor till their years were ended; who live on in the grateful memory of the following generations."

1837-1937

PREFACE

A person who builds for future generations gains thereby a kinship with those who live in the later days when the vision has been realized. Mary Lyon built always for the future. She saw herself as standing on the threshold of a new age in education, as "laboring in the portico" or "clearing the ground" for that "temple" which was "destined to continue from generation to generation." The structure of which she caught glimpses was the woman's college of to-day. To her own thought it was not simply Mount Holyoke Seminary which she was founding. That institution for the higher education of girls, with its public endowment and permanent foundation, was to be an example that could be used again and again. Five years before its opening day she wrote to her friend Professor Hitchcock of Amherst College suggesting the need for one or two seminaries in every State, where older young ladies from different parts of the country might "come together, together receive instruction, form and mature their plans, and exert over each others' views and feelings an extensive and powerful influence."

The time has passed when institutions and historians list dates in the field of higher education for girls as if in a Marathon race for priority. Mary Lyon's own correspondence shows her to be one of a growing company of thoughtful men and women who were awake to the educational needs of girls and to the service which educated women could render to the community and the nation. Joseph Emerson, Mrs. Emma Willard, and Miss Catharine Beecher voiced these ideas in print; Miss Grant and Miss Lyon worked together and singly towards these ends. But it was Mary Lyon who succeeded in establishing in 1837 a seminary built on a foundation so broad that it could last one hundred years and serve for the colleges of to-day, a foundation of permanent endowment, of trustee administration, of a curriculum following as

closely as was possible the accepted collegiate course of study of the time, of community life, and of training in responsibility to society.

Her letters, placed against their contemporary background, show how she accomplished this feat. The story has been told by others, and will be told again. Here we let her tell it for herself, and gain in so doing a new self-portrait of this scholarly, far-sighted woman, with her contagious enthusiasm and unusual executive ability. It is a picture with many a modern touch, but it is set in the framework of another age, when travel was by stagecoach and written communication was slowed down to the speed at which a horse could cover distances, though in the later years railroads and steamboats came to be taken for granted. But ideas flashed rapidly between kindred minds, and the human touches are many and entertaining.

For a gracious opening of the archives of Mount Holyoke College for this purpose, we are indebted to President Mary E. Woolley; for friendly interest in the undertaking to her successor, President Roswell Gray Ham; for consultation and assistance to Miss Flora B. Ludington, librarian, and Mr. Robert Christ, as well as to Miss Bertha E. Blakely and Miss Mary Allen Edge, archivist, during the initial stages of the work. The sponsorship of the project by the Alumnae Association, under whose auspices this volume is published, has involved assistance on many lines and constant interest. We express our especial thanks to Miss Mary C. J. Higley, 1921, Alumnae Secretary, to her assistant, Mrs. Ruth Jagger Day, 1930, and to Miss Florence Clement, 1914. Without the constant support and encouragement of Mrs. Helene Pope Whitman, 1904, in whose presidency and under whose inspiration the project originated, and Miss Louise Whitefield Bray, 1912, in especial measure, and Mrs. Mary Hume Maguire, 1918, all of the original committee, the book would never have been completed. Its publication is owed to successive Alumnae boards, and especially to two presidents, Mrs. Maud Titus White, 1911, and Mrs. Gertrude Knox Wells, 1909.

The editor has not been unmindful of the danger of misrepre-

sentation of Miss Lyon's thoughts and attitudes due to the previous editing and possible doctoring of the printed letters which necessarily form so large a part of this volume. To one who becomes familiar with the personnel of the early group of editors and the circumstances and motives which influenced them in their selection of material, the tendency to bias becomes fairly obvious and definitely localized. There is no doubt that Mrs. Banister and her colleagues tended to over-emphasize Miss Lyon's dependence on her and to soften by the inclusion of many personal protestations of affection and loyalty the obvious fact that Miss Lyon found it necessary to sever their professional connection in order to carry out her own ideas unhampered. The editor has tried to steer a safe course through this portion of the material by omission of what seemed unimportant and repetitive, leaving the reader to form a personal opinion from representative extracts. The principle of selection throughout has been to present the development of Miss Lyon's educational idea and of her personality as shown in her letters. The letters to Mrs. Banister (Miss Grant) are used to present a calendar of events and of Miss Lyon's expressions of opinion concerning them, a phase of the situation on which there was little or no reason for editorial bias. That any comprehensive view of Miss Lyon's thoughts and activities would be impossible without dependence on the printed letters is beyond question. The discovery of new material may also at any time throw further light on many points.

With appreciation of the many courtesies extended to her, the editor assumes nevertheless full responsibility for the method of selection and presentation of this century-old material and for any errors or unintentional misrepresentations which may have crept into the work.

Marion Lansing, 1903

Cambridge, Massachusetts,
November, 1937.

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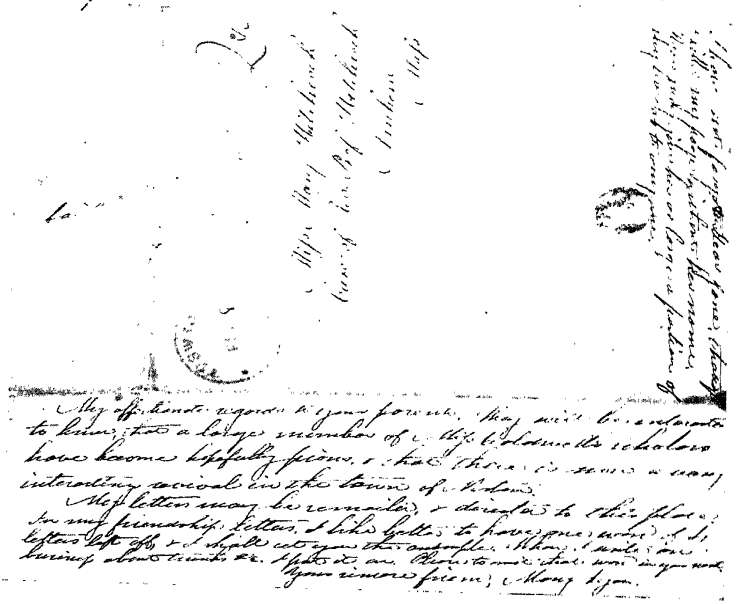
MARY LYON
THROUGH HER LETTERS



LETTER TO THE HITCHCOCK CHILDREN February 8, 1836

(*See page 183*)

THE LETTERS

At the door of a district school in Buckland, a little village high in the hills of western Massachusetts, there appeared one wintry morning in the year 1819 a girl whom the pupils greeted joyfully and hastened to introduce to their schoolmaster as Mary Lyon. They knew her well, for she was a Buckland girl and had taught their small brothers and sisters in the summer schools of the region for several years, boarding sometimes in the family of one or another of her numerous uncles and sometimes in other homes. To Daniel Forbes, the master, Mary explained that she had just finished a term of teaching a little neighborhood school in one of the outlying districts and would like to attend here for the rest of his term, studying under him the art of writing.

Although there was no desk free, nor even at the moment an empty chair which could be assigned to the newcomer, Mr. Forbes welcomed her cordially. That was the crowning merit of those old-time, ungraded schools. Their doors were always open. Without too much insistence on set dates and fixed courses, their young teachers admitted pupils of all ages and imparted to them willingly such knowledge as they themselves possessed.

Winter schools of this mountain region were apt to be full, for at that season the big boys were free from farm chores and could take their chance for acquiring learning along with the older girls and such children as lived near enough the schoolhouse to reach it in all weathers. So Mary Lyon took her modest place among the "common scholars" on one of the benches in this schoolroom which had not long since been a carpenter's shop. Within a few days, however, her teaching ability and good-nature were recognized and a chair was placed for her at the end of the master's table. Here, as Mr. Forbes wrote many years later, when the name of Mary Lyon was known up and down the land, "she

patiently sat from day to day, affording assistance in instructing the younger classes as she found she was needed, until she had acquired the principles of the art." [1]

Penmanship, or chirography as it was called, was at that time an art, a fine art painstakingly acquired by long practice, often under special writing masters, with the making and frequent remaking of nicely pointed quill pens as separate branches of the instruction. We shall find Mary teaching it later. One does not believe that she acquired it easily, for she was apt in her young days to be impatient of precise rules and customs which retarded the swift action of her mind. But that she did master it according to the strict standards of that time is shown by the beautiful penmanship of the first letter we have from her hand, a letter written the year before she came to Mr. Forbes which mentions an earlier writing school attended for eleven days at the close of a winter term.

This letter, written in 1818 to Miss Polly Newhall of Conway, is wholly different from any other which we have from her pen. It shows Mary fitting into the mould of her time, from which her strong spirit was soon to emerge into vigorous, independent expression. She was writing, as she had been taught, a correctly phrased epistle of schoolgirl friendship composed in the style of a day when autograph albums with sentimental effusions (we have Mary's own!) were in vogue.

"Calling to Mind," she begins, "the many pleasing interviews I have enjoyed in company with my dear Polly, and likewise brightened by the reception of her sweet epistle, I take this method of indirectly addressing a few lines for her perusal.

"I shall not fill my paper with apologies, while I realize that my correspondent, from the discernment of her mind, would readily behold the folly of such a practice, should I attempt. Likewise I feel confident, from that friendship and tenderness with which I have ever been favored, that any epistles, although without arrangement or connection, form or beauty, will be received as a line from one of her former school associates and a memorial of esteem from one with whom I trust ever will be maintained a

reciprocal friendship. . . . Although we cannot enjoy daily interviews for witnessing our friendship, yet how are we privileged with opportunities for this transmission of our ideas by writing. What can approach so near real society as epistolary converse?" [2]

To Mary Lyon's pleasure in "epistolary converse," an elaborate phrase which in her mature years she would have been the first to discard, and to her constant employment of the art of chirography which she was taking such pains during her schooldays to perfect, we owe the three hundred and more letters or extracts from letters which are the basis of this volume.

Fully half of these letters are in manuscript just as they came from her hand, most of them with the sheets folded to serve as their own envelopes and with postmark and stamp or notice of the amount of postage due to be collected on their delivery. There was some difference of opinion, it seems, as to whether a letter went through as quickly with postage prepaid as it did if the postmaster had a financial incentive for its delivery. The letters of the early years are in a beautiful, correct script, as clear and regular in their exactness as if each separate character were engraved. The later ones, though easily legible (except when economy of paper and postage made her adopt another custom of the time and write both ways of the page or around the margins), show signs of the stress of haste and of the crowding pressure of ideas which must be transferred as rapidly as possible to paper so that they could be shared with family and friends and spread as far and fast as pen and post could manage it.

We who now turn their yellowed pages after a hundred years are not the first to have found Mary Lyon's letters precious and revealing. Immediately following her death, which occurred in 1849 when she was only fifty-two years old, there was a rather surprising realization of their importance by her close circle of friends and associates. Four ladies of this group, headed by Edward Hitchcock, her lifelong friend, took time in their busy lives

to gather and arrange all available letters, choosing with rare wisdom to use selections from a large number of them as the actual text of their biographical tribute instead of filtering their contents through their own minds. The result is a memoir published in 1851 under the weighty title of "The Power of Christian Benevolence, Illustrated in the Life and Labors of Mary Lyon, compiled by Edward Hitchcock, D.D., LL.D., President of Amherst College; with the assistance of others."[3] The "others," as Dr. Hitchcock states in his preface, were Mrs. Zilpah Grant Banister, with whom Miss Lyon taught for many years and to whom a large and valuable group of letters are addressed, Miss Hannah White of Ashfield, Massachusetts, a friend and associate of her younger days, and Mrs. Eunice Cowles (Miss Caldwell) and Mrs. Eddy (Miss Whitman), both of Mount Holyoke Seminary.

It is our misfortune that most of the letters or extracts from letters used in the Hitchcock volume were apparently destroyed after being put into print. For our security in depending on the printed versions for facts and educational pronouncements almost as we do on the manuscript letters we quote Professor Hitchcock's naïve assurance: "I have not dared to alter them much lest I should weaken their force."[4] We are further constrained by our own comparison, in the few cases where we possess both the original and the printed transcript, to believe him, though we recognize and regret the smoothing out of all those errors and infelicities of wording which make the letters direct from her pen more human and appealing. In her busiest years, when she crowded the necessary correspondence connected with her seminary into every spare moment, Mary Lyon made mistakes in spelling, crossed out phrases and wrote in others, and even omitted words.

The memoir letters cover the early years, for which there are few hand-written epistles, and fill in gaps in the other periods. For the story of the founding of Mount Holyoke Seminary they are essential, and it is important that they be made accessible to modern readers, since the volumes in which they appeared are

not easily obtainable even for antiquarians. The fact that they have been previously edited and come to us, in many cases, only in extracts has governed the method of treatment in the present volume, since they must be fitted into their places in a chronological narrative instead of being handled simply as letters.

Our quarrel with Dr. Hitchcock and his lady assistants, if we venture any criticism of these faithful friends to whom we owe so much, is in their decision as to which letters and parts of letters they deemed worthy of preservation. They took themselves and their task so seriously, these contemporaries of Mary Lyon, treating her epistles as if they were scriptures composed for our edification. They treasured each religious paragraph and the letters bearing on educational matters, but discarded as too commonplace to put into print those familiar and casual items which would be of such value to-day as a picture of the times as well as for personal portraiture.

But neither the religious and educational ardor of these devoted friends, nor the inexorable limits of space, lamented by Dr. Hitchcock, can keep the eager, vibrant spirit of Mary Lyon from shining through her simple, straightforward accounts of her thoughts and doings as she traveled up and down New England and as far west as New York State, Lake Erie, and Detroit, always for the furtherance of the great educational venture which became her chosen life-work. For completing our picture we are fortunately not wholly dependent on either printed volumes or manuscript letters, but have also notebooks and slips of paper on which she jotted down her lists of moneys, her ideas for talks at school assemblies, and her memoranda of duties to be performed, letters to be written, and supplies purchased.

Fortunately, too, it is not only the Mary Lyon material that has been preserved. This was a period when families cherished any and all possessions. The house-cleaning zeal of the trustee's wife who stuffed a bunch of Miss Lyon's letters into the stove one spring day and reproached herself for so doing almost before the flames had consumed them, was balanced in most cases by the equally strong New England tradition of never throwing any-

thing away. So from attics, trunks, and the inner drawers of mahogany secretaries there have come forth in the years pupils' diaries, letters written home from school, notes taken in class, and other correspondence, to be put into the Mount Holyoke College archives alongside the letters written by Mary Lyon herself. All help to create the picture of this period of the 1820's, 1830's, and 1840's.

None of the Mary Lyon letters, save a few formal writings in the nature of appeals for money or support which were printed in letter form as circulars for wide distribution, were intended for the eye of anyone but their recipient. This is their value as historical material. "Of all the letters inserted in this volume," writes Dr. Hitchcock near the close of his 486-page memoir, "probably not one was written with the remotest idea on her part that it would ever appear in print; and her friends can easily conceive with what energy and earnestness, were she now alive, she would lift her hands, and open her large eyes, and exclaim against the use we have ventured to make of letters written under such circumstances. We do in fact value them so much the more, because they were all called forth by the feelings of personal friendship. . . . We are sure that every sentence is an exact picture of Mary Lyon's feelings at the time she wrote." [5]

THE EARLY YEARS

Since only a single letter has as yet come to light from the first twenty-four years of Mary Lyon's life, and only four letters date from the following summer, we must depend for our knowledge of this important period on other contemporary records. Some of those which we have are her own: a description of the home life of her childhood, a single sheet of paper on which is jotted down a calendar of her winters and summers of study and teaching, and references in later years to experiences of her youth.

From other sources we can draw pictures of the background of Mary's school life, and necessary and delightful portraiture of the persons with whom she was to be associated all down the years: of Squire White and his daughters, of Zilpah Grant in the days when she was called "Polly," and of that towering figure in "female education," Reverend Joseph Emerson, who started Miss Grant and Miss Lyon on their path. Besides its interest this portraiture is valuable for our reading of later letters. Only as we know to whom Mary is writing, and what are the circumstances leading up to the correspondence, can the scattered letters take on their full significance.

I

MARY LYON'S FAMILY

Mary Lyon was a family person. Though her own home was broken up early and she could rarely be with her mother or sisters or brother in their homes, yet her personal life centered to a large degree in her family circle, which widened as the years went on to include interesting nieces and nephews whom she watched over and helped to educate. Fifty of the letters which we have, among them some of the most intimate and revealing, are addressed to members of her family. Other letters contain frequent reference to family happenings.

Mary was the fifth of eight children born to Aaron Lyon and his wife, Jemima Shepard, in their "mountain home," as she loved to call it, in Buckland, Massachusetts, which with Ashfield and Conway made a triangle of villages whose boundaries touched at a spot known as the "A B C Corners." Both the Lyon and the Shepard families were early settlers in this mountain region not far from Greenfield in Franklin County, which was at that time a part of Hampshire County and is now crossed by the Mohawk Trail highway. She was born February 28, 1797, six months after the death of a four-year-old Ezra, whose loss left Aaron, eight years older than herself, her only brother. With Electa, Jemima, and Lovina, her older sisters, and Rosina and Freelove, her younger, we come to feel almost intimate through the references in letters.

Her father, a solid, kindly citizen, church member, and neighbor, died in 1802 at the age of forty-five, when Mary was not yet six years old. On her mother fell the burden of rearing the family, with near-by uncles to render some help. Of that mother Mary Lyon gave a word-picture in the only formal book which ever came from her pen, a little publication issued in 1843 entitled "A Missionary Offering." [1]

I was strongly reminded [she writes] . . . of another widow whom I knew and loved forty years ago, and of her "mountain

home." She was not rich in the treasures of the earth. . . . But want, at that "mountain home," was made to walk so fairly and gracefully within the circle of limited means, that there was always room enough and to spare for a more restricted neighbor. I can see that loved widow, just as I did in the days of childhood. She is less than forty years of age, and her complexion is as fair and her forehead as noble and lofty as on her bridal day. Now she is in that sweet garden which needs only to be seen to be loved. Now she is surveying the work of the hired man and her young son on that wild, romantic farm; made, one would think, more to feast the soul than to feed the body. But almost always she was to be found busy, both early and late, amid her household cares, and in the culture of the "olive plants" around her table. In that domain nothing was left to take its own way. Everything was made to yield to her faithful and diligent hand. It was no mistake of that good-hearted neighbor, who came in one day begging the privilege of setting a plant of rare virtue in a corner of her garden, because, as he said, there it could never die. The roses, the pinks, and the peonies, those old-fashioned flowers which keep time with Old Hundred, could nowhere grow so fresh and so sweet as in that little garden. Nowhere else have I ever seen wild strawberries in such profusion and richness as were gathered near by. Never were rareripes so large and so yellow, and never were peaches so delicious and so fair, as grew on the trees of that favored farm. The apples, too, contrived to ripen before all others, so as to meet in sweet fellowship with peaches and plums, to entertain the aunts and cousins.

I can now see that "mountain home," with its sweet rivulet finding its way among rocks and cliffs and hillocks and deep, craggy dells. Then just beyond the precincts of the family domain was the "top of the hill," crowned by its high, rolling rock, ever inviting the enterprise of each aspiring heart. Everyone was amply repaid who would climb that steep hill and ascend that high rock. There might be seen the far-off mountains in all their grandeur, and the deep valleys and widely extended plains, and, more than all, that village below, containing only a very few

white houses, but more than some young eyes had previously seen. But, sweetest of all, the length of a mile or more, to the village church, was that wild, winding way, traversed each Sabbath morning by that orderly group, while the family pony gave the mother her horseback ride. There, too, in winter, was that sleigh, packed so snugly and gliding so gently over that same winding way to that same small church.

At that "mountain home," every want was promptly and abundantly met by the bounties of summer and the provident care for winter. The autumnal stores, so nicely sorted and arranged, always traveled hand in hand through the long winter, like the barrel of meal and cruse of oil. The apples came out fresh in the spring, and the maple sugar, that most important grocery of the neighborhood, was never known to fail before the warm sun, on the sparkling snow, gave delightful indication that sugar days were near. When gathered around that simple table, no one desired a richer supply than was furnished by the hand of that dear mother. The simple schoolday dress, too, so neat and so clean, and amply sufficient in the view of those young minds, should not be forgotten; while the rare gift of the Sunday suit, kept expressly for that occasion, formed an important era in the life of the possessor, and was remembered with grateful smiles for many days afterwards. The children of that household, thus abundantly supplied, never thought of being dependent or depressed. They felt that their father had laid up for them a rich store in grateful hearts, and among the treasures which will never decay; and that their mother, who was considered in all that neighborhood a sort of presiding angel of good works, was continually adding to those stores. I can now remember just the appearance of that neighbor who had a numerous household to clothe as she said one day, "How is it that the widow can do more for me than any one else?" [2]

Until Mary was six or seven years old there was a district school within a mile which she delighted to attend. After it was moved farther away her schooling was irregular, picked up term by term

in Ashfield or Buckland, while she lived with relatives or assisted in some family in return for her board. But her home training was not intermittent. With her sisters she was her mother's helper in all the varied doings of the household, gaining experience and skill that was to serve her well when she became in 1837 presiding head of a household of ninety at Mount Holyoke Seminary.

That schoolday dress to which she refers was not a boughten product, but was watched through the many processes of its manufacture, even from the growing of the flax in the home garden. In her volume of "Recollections of Mary Lyon" [3] Fidelia Fisk, pioneer missionary to Persia, tells the story almost as Mary herself might have told it, for Fidelia grew up in the same region, across the hills in Shelburne. The unfamiliar words create a picture of an almost forgotten art. The little girl, she says, saw the hired man or her own brother break or "swingle" the flax. The "swingle" used in this first process was a knifed instrument for beating and cleaning the leaves, separating them from the coarse, woody parts of the plant. The use of the "hatchel" came next, this name for the toothed instrument for combing flax being a New England variant for the more common name "hackle." Then the flax was wound upon the distaff of the little wheel, and Mary's mother spun the web.

> "Mary longed to help her," the story goes, "but they told her that 'little girls must learn to spin filling before warp;' and so the mother made the warp and Mary the filling, at the 'great wheel,' from the rolls that had been carded for her. Then came the day for dyeing the linen. The little country store furnished the indigo or copperas,* as might be called for, and the farm contributed other excellent dye-stuffs in the form of birch-bark, peach-leaves, and smart-weed. Then she saw it spooled and warped and woven in the loom in her own home, where she could watch that same mother as she 'sprung the treadle' and 'threw the shuttle,' and Mary wound all the quills till the work was done. . . . The winter dress was of hardly less interest to her, for she watched the sheep-shearing, the wool-picking and washing, the sending

* Ferrous sulphate, used to dye materials black and to make ink.

of the wool to the carding machine, and the sacks of rolls as they were returned. Again there was spinning, in which Mary had a large share. Sometimes that 'unbanding wheel' would trouble her; then her mother would sing to her,

It's not in the wheel, it's not in the band,—
It's in the girl who takes it in hand.

Weaving again followed spinning; the cloth was sent to the mill, and the bright red flannel came home for the winter dress. The pretty linen aprons of blue and white check, from the same piece with her mother's short-gown, more than satisfied her. And who could wish better shoes than the tanner and currier and neighborhood shoemaker produced from the skin of their own fatted calf?" [4]

Although she was the fourth daughter, many of the household tasks fell to Mary. Electa, the oldest sister was away from home for long terms of school-teaching even before her marriage in 1808, and Jemima and Lovina were probably often away, too. So it was Mary who helped her mother with the making of blankets and bedquilts and of that coverlet concerning which she used to tell her students at Mount Holyoke that "it had a blue side for winter and a white side for summer, so we could use it all the year round." The lessons in weaving proved useful when at the age of seventeen she began her teaching in Shelburne Falls, receiving seventy-five cents a week as pay for her services and being "boarded round" by families, five days for each scholar. The young teacher, says Miss Fisk, "rose rapidly in the estimation of her employers when it was whispered in the neighborhood that she had been teaching one of the daughters how to bring out damask from the hand-loom." [5]

In 1810 Mrs. Lyon married again, becoming the third wife of Jonathan Taylor of Ashfield. She took with her from the mountain home the two younger daughters, Rosina, eleven years old, and Freelove, nearly nine, and left thirteen-year-old Mary with her brother Aaron, then twenty-one years old. The year she was fifteen Mary took entire charge of the household for this dearly loved older brother, who generously helped towards her education by giving her a dollar a week, a silver dollar, for her services. "I never saw any

such dollars before, nor have I since," Miss Lyon used to say of this first money she ever earned.[6]

Aaron married in 1812, and Mary continued to be a member of his family whenever she was free from school duties, loving dearly the four children, Aaron Ezra, Nancy, Lucy, and Franklin, who came during the next seven years. (We shall meet this favorite niece Lucy as Miss Lyon's valued assistant at Mount Holyoke Seminary in the 1840's.) Then Aaron moved in 1819 to western New York, an adventurous step which proves that Mary did not have the only pioneering blood in the family. His going broke up the childhood home, but before that time Mary had begun to make her own world, a world of schools where she studied and taught, and had gained an adopted home which was to be almost like her own, that of Squire and Mrs. White in Ashfield. Her brother had wanted her to go West with him when the family made the move, and three years later he returned to urge her to come and teach in that new region where his children were growing up and the schools were poor and in need of such teachers as herself. But Mary's roots had by that time grown too deep into New England soil.

II

AT SANDERSON ACADEMY

In view of the fact that Mary Lyon's later life was devoted to helping girls to get an education, it is interesting to see by what means and with what persistence she obtained her own. During the first quarter of the nineteenth century the academy was the New England solution for the higher education of its boys and, to a lesser but not inconsiderable extent, of its ambitious girls. Where the district school left off, the academy began. Considering the isolation of her farm home, it is a bit surprising that Mary Lyon attended two good academies. The first, Sanderson Academy, was founded at the opportune moment almost at her own door, in Ashfield, one of the A B C triangle of towns. Her term at Amherst Academy was due to her own energy and initiative in journeying across the mountains for this educational opportunity.

Of Sanderson Academy in Ashfield, she says in a letter of December 1, 1823, "This is the school where I was principally educated, and to which I feel in no small degree indebted." [1] Eighteen letters or extracts from letters, all but one from printed volumes, dating from 1823 to 1831, bear testimony to the place this school had in her life. Of it she says in a letter of 1828, "I find that this academy, where I received so much instruction, and where I have labored so much, from time to time, has taken a firmer hold of my affections than I supposed." [2]

Sanderson Academy opened in September, 1817, with Mary Lyon, then twenty years old, in its first class. Its origin is typical of the spirit of the educated ministry of New England, those men who seem to have counted their own learning as a trust of which they must pass on as much as possible to the young people of their parishes. Such a man was Reverend Alvan Sanderson,[3] graduate of Williams College in 1802, who taught school in Conway during the winter following his graduation, then studied divinity and became in 1808 the colleague at Ashfield of Nehemiah Porter, that amazing

minister who carried the duties of his parish alone up to the age of eighty-eight when he was finally persuaded to turn some of them over to this young assistant. Mr. Sanderson soon succeeded to the full pastorate, but tuberculosis developed in 1814 and forced his resignation in 1815.

Mary Lyon says of Mr. Sanderson during his pastorate that "he was in the habit of visiting the different schools of the town, and when he did, his eye was sure to fix on every promising scholar, and a word was dropped that never failed to awaken brighter hopes and give fresher vigor in the work of acquisition."[4] During that period he established a number of evening schools in different points of the widely scattered town where the pupils, without charge, could have the benefit of his instruction. Illness so severe as to force him to resign his pastorate did not quench his passion for serving his young people. In the spring of 1816 he opened a grammar and classical school in a small one-story building, formerly used as a store, which he had moved to his own yard. There he taught until his death in June, 1817.

Mr. Sanderson's contribution to education did not cease with this gallant use of his waning strength. After his death it was found that he had made provision to perpetuate this "infant institution," making it his residuary legatee and naming for it seven trustees, among them one of his two executors, "Thomas White, Gentleman," who was to be Mary Lyon's second father and special providence in the care of her moneys for the next thirty years. How much the Sanderson bequest was we do not know exactly, but from an early vote of the trustees to expend during the first year the interest of fourteen hundred dollars "if necessary," we judge that it amounted to approximately that sum. The possibility of not being forced to draw on the fund to even that mild extent came from the fact that the pupils were to pay a tuition of two shillings a week. Mary's problem as a student was how to manage to pay that sum. Her contribution to the school during her days as assistant teacher and later as head of the girls' department lay in attracting to it by her unusual teaching large numbers of scholars.

"Attended two quarters in Ashfield" is Mary Lyon's record of the fall and winter terms, 1817-1818, when she studied under Elijah Burritt,[5] one of that series of excellent men teachers who were to provide the food for that insatiable mind of hers. She was

to keep in touch with him in later years through their mutual interest in science and education. Now he was a young man, teaching after preparatory courses at Williston Academy in Easthampton, Massachusetts, and graduation from Williams College. He instructed his pupils in geography, arithmetic, logic, rhetoric, and English and Latin grammar, his assignment in the last-named subject providing the oft-repeated story of Mary's learning and reciting the contents of Adams' Latin Grammar between a Friday afternoon and the close of school on Monday.[6] When she was questioned in after years about the episode, she said:

"Oh, it was one of those schools where they do nothing but study and recite. . . . You just learned what was in the book. I traced out the likenesses and differences . . . and could commit anything to memory quick, when I was young. And as to the rules of syntax, they are so much like those in English grammar that it did not take long to learn them. So you see, it was no great feat after all."[7]

Ten years later we find Mary Lyon writing from Ashfield of her own methods of teaching grammar there, "I think I can safely say that I never saw so much lively interest on the subject, among so many, as I now see from day to day."[8] But we may be sure Sanderson Academy was not at that time "one of those schools where they do nothing but study and recite."

A map of the United States which Mary drew at this time is still extant, and with it an old school program which gives her name as appearing in a school "drama," entitled "Christianity in India."[9] (Mary took the part of the mother of a young Moses in the bulrushes.) Under Mr. Burritt, who was later to be the author of mathematical and astronomical textbooks which were pioneers in that field, Mary calculated eclipses and with a fellow-pupil made an almanac.

This is the period when Mary Lyon is described as "all intellect" and as "not knowing that she had a body to care for." Much of the information comes from members of the White family, with whom there now began the association which was to bring so much into her life. Her special friendship at this time was with Amanda, whom she met on one of her first days in Ashfield and asked to be her seatmate at the school. The friendship between these two girls, so unlike in all particulars and so entirely devoted to each other, continues through Byfield days and on into the years. To Amanda's

worshipful yet conscientious reporting we owe many of our pictures of Mary in these schooldays.

At Sanderson Academy they occupied from the first the same desk. "I pursued the same branches of study that she did, so far as I could keep up with her," wrote Amanda after Mary Lyon's death. "She was ever ready to lay aside her books and lend a helping hand to those of weaker intellect. Though nearly thirty years have elapsed since then, I seem even now to see her cheerful, laughing face turned upon me, as I presented some Gordian knot for her to unravel." [10] The family with whom she boarded that first term judged that Mary did not sleep more than four hours a night, spending all her free hours in study. Here we recognize for the first time that amazing foundation of good health which was to stand her in good stead for the next twenty years of most arduous labor. Other educators, Miss Grant and Catharine Beecher, found their efforts hampered by ill-health. Mary Lyon could count on the heritage of good country stock to carry her through the most strenuous endeavors. In the end she drew on it too heavily, but it sustained her through the years in which she brought her great idea to fulfillment.

In Squire White, Amanda's father, we gain a picture of the forward-looking citizen of the time. Forward-looking he must have been, as his support of education and especially girls' education shows. He not only backed his young minister in starting the local academy but encouraged his own daughters, Amanda and Hannah, in the pursuit of higher education. When Mary Lyon's scant supply of money gave out and even the sale of all her household store of linens and the spinning of two coverlets to pay tuition could not suffice to keep her longer at Sanderson Academy, he and his gracious wife took her into their well-appointed home.

From that moment he was her champion as well as her guardian. Some of the men of the village asked him that winter about this wonderful girl with whom none of the boys could keep up in school. "But how is it about her work?" they queried. "Does she really do anything, or do you just about give her her board?"

"Well," replied the Squire, "Mary wings the potatoes," a phrase which Fidelia Fisk interprets as meaning that she brushed ashes off them with a feathered wing. So we have one more picture of the girl at this time in her life, standing before "the great open fireplace with its generous back-log and fine bed of hot ashes in front, where

the potatoes were often and well roasted . . . wing in hand, bending over the smoking pile of potatoes, just unburied, and winging each so well that no one who sat at that table wished there was a better way to cook their potatoes." [11]

Good Squire White! it was he who persuaded his fellow-trustees to grant Mary free tuition at the academy while he took her home to board. We shall see him packing her into the roomy carryall with his daughter Amanda to drive to Joseph Emerson's seminary at Byfield, having decided with and for her that she might spend some of her small patrimony for that purpose; and later he was urging, with the terse advice, "Try her," that she be engaged as assistant to the principal of Sanderson Academy, although no woman had held such a post. During all the years we shall find Mary corresponding with him about money matters; and at the moment when she had burned her bridges behind her and was embarking on her lonely, pioneering educational adventure of founding Mount Holyoke Seminary, it was to him that she poured out her soul in a long letter outlining her ambitious plans and seeking his aid in carrying them out.

The family tells, too, that because the Squire cared so much for Mary he used to take her into a room and by mimicry show her so kindly that it could not hurt, some of the awkwardnesses which might stand in the way of her success as a teacher. To smooth out these personal infelicities of the countrybred girl was for a time the special mission of the White family, a service portrayed in the biographical accounts supplied President Hitchcock by the lady writers, and particularly by Amanda (Mrs. Ferry).

It was hard for Mary Lyon to fit herself into the pattern of a young lady of the 1820's; and that she had "undesirable habits of person and manners" all seemed to agree. For instance, testifies Amanda in her thirty-year-later statement concerning the Sanderson Academy and Byfield days, "she then needed constant watchfulness as to her personal appearance, the care of her clothing, &c. Indeed, she did not devote sufficient thought and attention to the subject to know when she was suitably dressed to appear in company. Of course," she continues, "she never went out without my inspection, to see that all was right; as she was very liable to leave off some article, or put one on the wrong side out. She was also one of the unfortunate ones whose wearing apparel seems doomed to receive the contents of every overturned inkstand or lamp; but she met every

such accident with the same good humor and pleasantry that she manifested on every occasion." [12]

"The best humor in the world" was Mary's response to every suggestion for her improvement, to every small but trying vicissitude. She was ready to admit everything about herself. "I have corrected more such things than anybody ought to have," she remarked once to a kindly friend who pointed out some small defect; and she was able to assure students at Mount Holyoke that they could overcome any minor disabilities since she had corrected so many more. It must have been a difficult path that she trod in these schooldays when even her roommate Amanda, though declaring herself conscious of her own inferiority, still felt it her duty while she was with her "to be faithful in helping her to *see, feel,* and *correct* these defects." Amanda bears equal testimony to her friend's humility and desire to reform. Mary's response to suggestion was to "come directly to her, place a hand upon each shoulder, while her bright, beaming eyes and sunny face spoke the gratitude of her heart," and exclaim, "O, was there ever a poor, erring mortal that had such kind friends!"

For their constant chastening of the exuberant and heedless Mary the "kind friends" excused themselves, both at the time and in later years, by saying that they felt these infelicities would greatly detract from the "important station of usefulness" for which they sensed her to be destined. That the chastening was not too constant and did not press too heavily upon Mary's spirits is testified by Byfield recollections of her as brimming over with vitality and good cheer.

Mary Lyon emerged from her long course of arduous self-reform with a manner and bearing acceptable to her exacting generation, but even in her Holyoke days she was wont to dash upstairs and down with her cap-strings flying, to put her head deep into the inner recesses of the new-fangled Rumford oven and continue about her business oblivious of the smooches there acquired, and to belie in other endearing ways the correctness of her formal portraits. Miss Grant, who was a model of all that a lady should be, could never succeed in making her co-worker into a typical lady principal. But the efforts of her friends and the influence of gentle surroundings during these preparatory years are the more interesting because while they enriched Mary Lyon's life and helped her, yet they never brought her into complete conformity with the accepted pattern of her times.

III

OUT INTO THE WORLD

Amherst Academy, 1818

Mary Lyon's next adventure in quest of learning took her away from home, out into the world of educated men and women as it was represented in the pleasant village of Amherst, where an academy had recently been started under the sponsorship of Noah Webster and other fathers of families, and where a college was shortly to be founded. Her connection with Amherst is such a vital factor in her personal and professional life that it is needful for us who wish to understand and evaluate her background to see this educational center as she saw it in her student days. From this time on the thread of Amherst connections runs through her correspondence as it did through her life.

It is easy to record the simple facts as they have come down to us: that after her two terms at Sanderson Academy, Mary went back to her teaching that summer of 1818, planning and saving to go away to school even as the more ambitious boys went away to academy, seminary, and college. And she was already twenty-one years old, living in a period when girls married young.

When Mary Lyon reached Amherst, she was not to find herself conspicuous for her age. "They were of all ages, from nine to thirty-two," says the preceptress of the girls' department, "and from all parts of Massachusetts and the adjoining states. Some had been teachers." [1] She was one of ninety-two "Misses," as the quaint single sheet broadside (about 16 by 13 inches) lists them with the names of their home towns. About half the girls lived in Amherst, but others hailed from as far away as Bangor, Maine, and Wilmington and Newfane in Vermont. Massachusetts students came from Dover, Wendell, Burbridge, Holden, Westfield, Leominster, West Brookfield, Pelham, and New Braintree as well as from the nearer towns and villages of Deerfield, Northampton, Shelburne, Enfield, and Charlton, with Mary Lyon the one girl from Buckland. Thus early did she learn the

pulling power of a school of high quality on girls as well as boys, for Amherst Academy had gained in the four years of its existence a reputation as the best school for boys or girls in western Massachusetts.

This academy had grown out of a need. The men of culture in the village were not satisfied with the limited facilities of the district schools and sought to provide suitable educational opportunities for their sons, who must be prepared for college, and for the daughters who were growing up alongside of the boys. Amherst was the central village of a prosperous farming community in the Connecticut valley, a village in the process of expanding from a population of 1400 in the census of 1800 to 2000 in 1821, the year when the college was to be opened. It had attracted Noah Webster when in the hard times of the War of 1812 he found the cost of living too great in New Haven and decided to retreat with his family to a country town while he spent the next few years working on his great dictionary.[2]

Mr. Webster was not responsible for the idea of the academy. Subscriptions had opened two months before his arrival in September of 1812. But with his tremendous enthusiasm and ready devotion to any cause which appealed to him he furnished a considerable impetus to the undertaking. Moreover he brought, besides seven children of whom the younger ones were in need of such a school, a rich and varied educational experience. His "Blue-backed Speller" was the standard textbook in every school in the land. Mary Lyon had been brought up on it and had taught its lessons to her pupils. He was also especially interested in education for girls. Thirty years earlier, when he was still a teacher, he had written into the announcement of an intended school words concerning "the little regard that is paid to the literary improvement of females." When in New Haven, as a member of a school-visiting committee, he had been unable in 1798 to find a satisfactory school for his daughter Emily, he had called together a group of leading citizens and arranged for the organization and financing of a school which should be open to girls as well as boys. This Union School, backed financially through the sale of one hundred shares of stock, opened within a year in a new brick schoolhouse with two rooms, one for boys and one for girls. Its success is shown by the record of an attendance at one time of fifty-two boys and sixty-three girls. So when he arrived at Amherst to find subscriptions already being solicited for an academy, he felt himself to be on familiar ground. He could not give money, but he could talk,

with an eloquence which charmed money out of his hearers. The results of the efforts of these Amherst parents was that by the end of the year 1814 a "spacious" three-story brick building, which had cost $5000, was ready to be dedicated.

The school was always intended to be coeducational. "Males," according to the announcement of 1816, were to be instructed "in the learned Languages, and other branches usual in Academies—Females in the useful and ornamental branches of Female education." Under a succession of able teachers (according to a competent eye-witness, quoted by Mr. Tuckerman,[3] to whose research we owe many of these facts), "the Academy obtained a reputation second to none in the State, and indeed the ladies' department was in advance of the same department in other institutions, as might be shown by a simple comparison of the studies pursued and textbooks in use by the young ladies." [4]

Into this environment entirely outside any of her previous experience came Mary Lyon, "then," according to one of her teachers, "uncultivated in mind and manners, of large physique, twenty-one or twenty-two years of age, and receiving her first impulse in education. She commenced with grammar and geography, and soon advanced to rhetoric and logic. Having a comprehensive mind and being very assiduous in her studies, she improved rapidly." [5]

"My mother," reported an Amherst girl of the 1840's, "used to sit and tell us about Mary Lyon at school. She would make us see just how she looked in her linsey-woolsey * dress. . . . She was always to be found, out of school hours, in her favorite corner, studying as hard as she could, but ready to help every one that cared to be helped." [6]

It was only a single term that Mary could afford to spend at Amherst, but what a difference it must have made in the outlook of a girl so impressionable and with the advantage of some maturity! From her humble corner she looked on at a life which reflected the best New England culture. There were assemblies on Wednesday afternoons when all the scholars gathered in the upper hall for reviews, declamations, compositions, exercises in reading "in which both gentlemen and ladies participated," with spectators admitted and often present in large numbers. Here began her acquaintance with chemistry, a subject due to become an important factor in her

* Linsey-woolsey was, as the name implies, a coarse cloth made of linen and wool.

own study and teaching. This subject, it is reported, "was then just beginning to be studied in schools outside of Colleges, but was taught in Amherst Academy with lectures and experiments by Prof. Graves who had been lecturer on Chemistry in Dartmouth College." [7] Another subject studied at the academy is "Herschel's Astronomy," with the calculation and projection of eclipses.

As president of the board of trustees, Mr. Webster visited the school at stated periods, addressing the students. He also opened his spacious home for receptions and parties. It was an experience for a country girl even to see a man like this, a scholar of impressive presence, his tall spare figure crowned by a massive head with high forehead and bushy hair. As she came and went from school, Mary might meet him on the village street, gesticulating as the words tumbled out of his mouth while he discoursed with some neighbor on the troubled state of the nation.

Here, too, began her knowledge of Orra White, daughter of Jarib White of Amherst, who was during the latter part of that school year to serve as preceptress at the academy. She was to marry young Edward Hitchcock, Mary's future biographer, and set up that home, first in Conway, during her husband's pastorate there, and then in Amherst, where Mary was to spend so many weeks and months.

Now in 1818 Mary Lyon must have gone back to Buckland from her single term with her horizon widely extended. The basis is laid for that conviction which she expressed later that this Connecticut valley region was a "genial atmosphere" for her intended educational enterprise, a feeling which called forth Miss Grant's word in a letter concerning their possible removal in 1829-30 to Greenfield from Ipswich: "Why should the light shine further on the Connecticut river than here?" [8] From the time of her early Amherst sojournings Mary Lyon seems to have felt that it did.

IV

JOSEPH EMERSON AND "FEMALE EDUCATION"

In an age whose leading spirits devoted themselves unreservedly to one good cause after another, Mary Lyon first met "female education" in that particular guise through her contact at Byfield with one of its most ardent and enlightened pioneer advocates, Reverend Joseph Emerson. His views, expressed in a "Discourse delivered at the dedication of Seminary Hall in Saugus, January 15, 1822," [1] were deemed by a group of important gentlemen so impressive as to be worthy of publication in a little book on the flyleaf of which they commend them and urge their wide circulation. As Mary Lyon had studied with him in the previous summer, this discourse is of more than ordinary interest in showing the influence to which she was then subjected and the early arguments for the cause which she was from that time to make her own.

"The distinguished honor," writes Mr. Emerson in one of his concluding paragraphs, "is probably reserved for our rising republic, to exhibit to the world examples of such female seminaries as the world has never witnessed. But where such an institution shall be erected, by whom it shall be founded, and by whom instructed, it is yet for the hand of Providence to develop." Yet in his classroom and associated with him in the preceding months had been Zilpah Grant and Mary Lyon who were so soon to start such projects. The text of this discourse was the verse which was to become, fifteen years later, through Miss Lyon's choice, the motto of Mount Holyoke Seminary and is still embodied in the college seal, Psalm 144:12, "That our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace."

The argument, somewhat softened by the quaint verbiage of the time, is nevertheless clear-cut and purposeful. Three questions open the discussion: what are the stations occupied by females, what qualifications are requisite to fill these stations, and how may these qualifications be acquired? To the first, following the usual reply of "daughter, sister, wife and mother" is added "teacher." Next to the domestic circle, says Mr. Emerson, the schoolroom is unquestionably the most important sphere. It has long, he continues, been his decided

opinion that Nature has peculiarly formed and designed the softer sex for the "noble and delightful, though arduous and trying, office of teaching." That their instructions can be "at once more excellent and less expensive" is an added advantage.

Beginning with the broad recommendation that "their minds be first consolidated," he suggests as qualifications the following points: health, strength and vigor of constitution, vigor of mind and intellectual improvement, good practical acquaintance with the operations of domestic life ("every domestic operation," he suggests, "may be considered as an experiment in Natural Philosophy or Chemistry"), thorough acquaintance with their own language (Grammar and Rhetoric), with Arithmetic (one of his own specialties), Natural Philosophy and Chemistry, if possible, and still more important, History ("what man has done") and Intellectual Philosophy ("what he is"), with Geography and Chronology included, and finally, most essential of all, a knowledge of God and the way of salvation. A broad platform, certainly, with no concessions to any supposed limitations of the female intellect!

For a young woman to acquire these qualifications, and thus "become a corner stone," Mr. Emerson admits to be, in the present state of education, difficult. The program he outlines starts with babyhood. He even suggests in a thoroughly modern manner "a great variety of inexpensive toys fraught with instruction," and continues with a detailed and graded list of studies for all ages. This list is interspersed with such practical suggestions as that the student should be "exposed to cold as much as possible without endangering her health," not poring over her books in a very warm room. That there is not now an institution calculated to carry through this program he regrets. But he rejoices withal in the fact that those in existence are so excellent and so rapidly improving and that they are so well patronized by "thousands" of American mothers who are ready to make any sacrifices to give their daughters such advantages. His discourse shows his familiarity with the "Address to the Public" regarding the need of permanent seminaries for girls which Mrs. Emma Willard had presented, at Governor Clinton's suggestion, to the New York legislature in 1819.[2]

The effect on young Mary Lyon of such a program presented by so inspiring a personality cannot be overestimated. In a letter written after his death she attempts to give her testimony thereto, but we

gain a more intimate sense of it through the story of those summer days at Byfield and a picture of this minister-teacher under whom she studied.

Joseph Emerson,[3] born in 1777, had graduated from Harvard in 1798, taught, studied for the ministry, returned to Harvard as a tutor under President Willard, and been called in 1803 to a pastorate in Beverly, Massachusetts. This he held until he was compelled by ill-health to relinquish it in 1816. From a long sojourn in the South he returned to open his seminary for teachers in the near-by town of Byfield in 1818. The early years of his ministry were marked by sorrows so heavy that they could not but affect the mental and spiritual outlook of a man so sensitive and of so frail a physique. We mention them because this outlook was reflected in the seriousness of his classroom and assembly discourses and had its effect, in turn, on his pupils. He had married in 1803 Nancy Eaton, a young pupil, who had died within a year. In 1805 he married Eleanor Reed, a friend of his first wife. She died in 1808. In 1810 he married Rebecca Hasseltine of Bradford, second daughter of the family which was to become famous in missionary circles through the marriage of the youngest daughter Nancy to Adoniram Judson. It was also to provide for Bradford Academy (when it became a girls' school) its able principal, Abigail Hasseltine.[4]

Rebecca Hasseltine had been, with two of her sisters and two brothers, part of the opening class at Bradford in 1803; and her first teaching after she graduated was in Byfield, only nine miles from her home, in the very building which she and Mr. Emerson were later to use for their seminary. Its history reflects a period when school facilities depended more on individual and neighborhood initiative than on public enterprise. Deacon Ben Coleman, by Byfield records, bought a frame meeting-house when it was left vacant because of a theological controversy, removed it to his neighborhood, and fitted it up to be used as a school and dwelling. Here young Rebecca taught, and here Mr. Emerson, purchasing it in March, 1818, set up his seminary, having spent about five hundred dollars in "repairs, alterations, and outfits," to make it suitable for accommodating not only the school proper but a preparatory school to be conducted by his wife for the younger pupils, and for housing his family with six or eight boarders. To this school came Zilpah Grant in 1820 and Amanda White and Mary Lyon in 1821.

V

ZILPAH POLLY GRANT—MARY LYON'S FRIEND AND COLLEAGUE

Mary Lyon's friendship with Miss Grant (later Mrs. Banister) is, next to her family ties, the outstanding personal relation of her life. To it and to Miss Grant's careful preservation of Miss Lyon's letters covering a period of eighteen years we owe much of our knowledge of Miss Lyon's thought and feelings. Whatever our final estimate of the influence of Miss Grant's ideas and personality on her younger friend, and especially on the biographical accounts of Mary Lyon through her supervision of and editing of all the earlier material after Miss Lyon's death, we should fail in our presentation of Mary Lyon's personal and public life did we not give as full a portrayal as is possible of this friend, distinguished also in the annals of American education, with whom for the coming dozen and more years her life was so closely associated.

The background of these two young women who met in Joseph Emerson's school was not unlike, though Miss Grant was more mature and experienced than Mary Lyon. Zilpah Polly Grant,[1] as she was christened when at the age of eighteen she made her public profession of the Christian faith, was a farmer's daughter, born May 20, 1794, in Norfolk, a village in the Green Mountains of northwestern Connecticut. Her father had been killed by the fall of a wellsweep in his yard during a wild snowstorm in the winter when Polly was two years old, and her brother Elijah, not yet fourteen years old, had taken up with the widowed mother the care of the farm and the younger children. Thus she and Mary Lyon had both experienced the extreme frugality of a farm home from which the active head had been taken, where the wife and children were left to struggle on alone, with the helping care of uncles and aunts. Polly Grant went, as did Mary Lyon in her hills, to the near-by district school where were gathered in a single room pupils ranging in age from four to twenty years, learning reading, writing, spelling, grammar, and geography, with speaking of pieces and spelling matches as the high spots of competition and interest.

By the spring of 1809, when she was not quite fifteen, Polly had so completely mastered all that the school had to offer that she was ready to go to a neighboring district a mile from her home and teach its little summer school in a log cabin schoolhouse. Two summers she taught there and two more in the neighboring town of Winchester, working winters with her mother in the home. Mrs. Grant, from whom she had her name Zilpah, was an unusual woman, keen and eager intellectually. Local memory pictures her as having always an open book at hand, either at the head of her spinning wheel, or on the table beside her when she was ironing, so that her active mind could be memorizing or digesting some moral truth while her hands were busy about household tasks. The winters Polly spent with her mother doubtless contributed as much to her mental advancement as the summers of study or teaching. Sometimes, too, Polly went to other homes to spin and bring back a little silver to add to the scant family store.

From the books read and re-read with her mother, among them Mason's "Self-Knowledge" and Baxter's "Call to the Unconverted," and from attendance at church and learning of the catechism, came the moral and religious education which led Polly to feel at the age of twelve "a great solicitude," which continued at intervals until at fifteen she went with an older friend for an evening interview with her pastor. One can understand better the comparative moderation which Miss Grant and Miss Lyon later practised in their religious dealings with their own students when one considers what this young girl was led, by the Calvinistic training of her day, to feel about herself.

"I was on the borders of despair," she writes fifty years later, recalling this pastoral visit, "and expecting to sink by the weight of my own sin to perdition, and was feeling that my guilt in not acknowledging God, in rejecting Christ, and in quenching the Spirit was too great to be forgiven." The only comfort her pastor could offer her was the somber assurance that it was as easy for God to forgive ten thousand sins as one. Therefore even she might yet be forgiven; it was not too late. The following Sabbath morning, having gone to her schoolhouse to be alone because of her extreme "mental agony," she saw the first ray of light when the idea came to her that the justice of God was beautiful to have denied peace to "so vile a being" as herself (though she recognized her outward life to have

been blameless), *until* she should have received Him. Peace began to come, and from that time until she came into the church the following spring, she could take comfort in the thought that she was, at least, striving to do what was pleasing to God.

Comparing that experience with the one which came a few years later to Mary Lyon in her mountain home, one can but rejoice at the greater simplicity and ease of Mary Lyon's advent into a realization of the Christian life. As she was on her way home one Sabbath afternoon from a memorable service conducted in the little Baptist church at Three Corners by her grandmother's brother, good old Elder Smith, there came over Mary a sense of God's love for her and goodness to her all the days of her life, and of her responding love for him.[2] It was a sweet and sane experience which stayed with her for years, though she came in the Byfield circle, under the influence of Mr. Emerson and Miss Grant, to feel the need of a further consecration and self-abasement.

Polly Grant taught three years in Norfolk and Winchester, becoming more in demand by school committees each year. Then a severe illness named by her physician "pleurisy" laid her low, and for a period of from two to three years she was an invalid, suffering constant pain and being led to believe that she had not long to live. It was from such an experience, with the serious and mature point of view which it created, that Zilpah Grant rose from her sickbed to return to active life. From that day to the day of her death nearly sixty years later she was never strong or fully well.

Meanwhile, in one of those crossings of paths which make history, Joseph Emerson's younger brother, Reverend Ralph Emerson, came in 1816 to be pastor of the church in Norfolk.[3] This was the first year of Zilpah's illness. So she did not meet the older brother, though he came to the installation and stayed in the village for several weeks. But she must have heard occasionally about him during the next two years. In 1818, the year he was starting his school in Byfield, she was renewing her teaching. The following winter she studied in the evenings with Reverend Ralph Emerson, who added to his pastoral duties the teaching of a group of young people who were eager for more advanced work in Grammar, History, and English Literature than they could get at the regular school.

The renewed experience of study exhilarated the young teacher, so recently restored to health. She read the prospectus of Byfield Semin-

ary with longing. Her pastor encouraged her to go. Her mother, who had married again, "did not oppose," and her older brother was sympathetic with her eagerness for intellectual training. Finally, in April, 1820, taking her entire fortune, which consisted of fifty dollars, she set out on her great adventure, carrying with her to Byfield a letter of introduction to Mr. Emerson from his brother.

But this attractive, able, intellectual woman of twenty-five years would have won her own welcome without any introduction. One had only to look into the strong face with the high forehead and keen, black eyes, its pronounced features softened by dark, golden-brown hair, and to observe the dignity of her bearing to know that here was a woman of no common talents and character. Mr. and Mrs. Emerson took her into their home and hearts. For six months she was a pupil in their school, which had at that time sixty-nine students in the seminary as well as a goodly number in the preparatory department. Then she stayed on to assist Mr. Emerson in a book which he was preparing for Sunday-school use, an "Outline of Questions on Scripture History." During the following summer, the year when Amanda White and Mary Lyon came to Byfield, she was teaching some of the elementary classes.

VI

MARY AND AMANDA AT BYFIELD

SUMMER OF 1821

You can hardly understand, young ladies [Miss Lyon used in later years to tell her Mount Holyoke daughters], what a great thing it was to get to Byfield. It was almost like going to Europe now. Why, it took us three long days to go. . . . Good Esquire White, who was one of my fathers, took me in his own carriage with his daughter. I was really a little homesick the second night, when I realized that I was so far from home. You will laugh, and you may laugh, for I am going to tell you that the next day I was really very homesick. We lost our way, and I did not know as we should ever find the noted Byfield, for the good people near Boston did not seem to know very well where it was. And can you believe it, young ladies, Miss White and I both cried! I cried just as hard as I could; and I really think that I outcried my friend whose good father smiled upon us. But we found Byfield, for Esquire White did something better than weep; and when he went back to Ashfield, he told our friends that he had left us in a good place, and that we would come home the next fall.[1]

When the kindly Squire found how much Mary wanted to go to this school with Amanda, he had persuaded her to accept a loan, arranging to repay it later from her teaching salary. That Mary even at twenty-four was still not an assured and confident teacher is shown by her instant response to his offer, "Suppose I should not succeed in teaching and could not pay it back!" [2]

In a seminary building made over from a former meeting-house the girls found themselves among fifty or sixty girls "ranging in age from gay misses to sedate, grown women." [3] There were no luxuries in furnishing, any more than there were frills in learning. The students sat on long benches at unpainted desks, as in any district school,

and took their turns at sweeping the room. The tuition fee was twenty-five cents a week. One does not wonder that Mr. Emerson took occasion one year to journey to Boston to deliver his series of Astronomical Lectures in order to get money for the support of his school, the lectures being advertised as having the benevolent purpose of the education of "pious and indigent young ladies."[4] With all their efforts he and the energetic Mrs. Emerson did not make a success financially, and moved at the end of this year of 1821 to the neighboring town of Saugus where he could preach as well as teach. But what mattered these simplicities to the students when over the school presided this scholarly gentleman, tall, spare, his face the marks of illness yet shining with his enthusiasm for imparting knowledge?

> "Sister Mary is quite provoked," Amanda wrote home, "that I have taken all the paper without leaving her any room to put in a word. She sends much love to all. She is gaining knowledge by handfuls—time with her is too precious to spend much of it in writing letters."[5]

Considering the aura of piety and strict formalism thrown about Mary's life by her early biographers, it is cheering to learn that during the first weeks she studied on Sunday, justifying herself when the faithful Amanda reasoned reprovingly with her by the sincere protest that for her the time was too short and the moments thus granted to her too valuable for her not to do so, with the added expression that she felt such to be her highest duty to God, who had her this given wonderful opportunity. Years later Mr. Emerson remarked to Miss Grant that he considered Mary Lyon superior in mental power to any other pupil he ever had in his seminary.[6]

The letters of this period, the first group which we have from Mary's pen, are taken from extracts in the Hitchcock volume.

A lady from Maine has just arrived to attend the seminary [she writes to her sister Rosina, July 30, 1821]. Perhaps you will be surprised when I tell you that she is a minister's widow. I should judge she was more than thirty years of age. This would be remarked as uncommon in any school but Mr. Emerson's. Though no married ladies were here last term, yet there had been many such in seasons past. . . .

You ask what proficiency I make in my studies. You know I always found difficulties, doubts, and inconsistencies in grammar; and the most I have done in that branch is to multiply these difficulties on every hand. Mr. E. remarked to us that nothing yet has been brought to perfection; and as there are difficulties in every pursuit, if a person sees none, it argues his almost entire ignorance. Dr. Emmons observed once to Mr. E. that he often found it much harder to make a pupil discover a difficulty than to remove it when discovered.[7]

Grammar was a "backbone subject" in all these schools. It seems to have been the central element in the framework of study for mental discipline, often more emphasized than arithmetic.

To her mother she writes from Byfield May 13, 1821.

I feel that this summer is, or ought to be, peculiarly profitable to me. Much depends on it. Such a spirit of piety is mingled with all Mr. Emerson's instructions that the one thing needful is daily impressed on our minds. From our scientific pursuits he is ever ready to draw practical and religious instruction. O my mother, I know you would be delighted to witness our devotional exercises, both morning and evening; to hear him read and explain the Scriptures, to hear such pious counsel from his lips, and to unite with him in his fervent prayers to the throne of grace in behalf of his scholars. He renders every recitation attractive. Never have I attended one from which I might not gain valuable information, either scientific, moral, or religious.[8]

Within two or three days of the opening of the term Mr. Emerson invited such pupils as were professors of religion to remain in the seminary hall during a recess period and urged them to use their influence on their fellow-pupils, announcing a weekly prayer-meeting which he requested them to attend. "This," says Amanda, "caused Mary much agitation of mind; for she felt that here was a dividing line. She must now class herself with the children of God, or those who knew him not." [9]

How Mary had escaped such classing of herself earlier, living as she did in a community swept by frequent revivals and marked by soul-

saving efforts, it is difficult to understand. "She studiously avoided any allusions to her own exercises of mind," comments the portion of the Hitchcock biography prepared under the direction of Hannah White (Amanda's sister) concerning those pre-Byfield years.[10] Here at Byfield she met for the first time that conflict between her intellectual ardor and her religious obligations which was to remain a source of distress to her in the management of her schools all down the years. Under the pressure of the Emerson-Grant influence she came to feel that she was yielding to temptation in becoming too completely absorbed in her studies. She did attend the weekly prayer meeting as a "professor of religion" and worked out, according to Amanda, what she felt to be a suitable balance of emphasis. But a long letter to her mother shows the self-distrust as to whether she was fully consecrated which marked the emotional life of most of the highly sensitive and intellectual persons of that time. We quote a portion of this letter of July 21, 1821.

An increasing anxiety for a revival in the seminary [is beginning] to prevail. I believe that in this respect Mr. Emerson has been highly blessed in his school. I cannot but think it has been owing, in a great measure, to his excellent instruction, together with the influence of his pupils, a great number of whom are pious. All, at this time, appeared to believe that it would be their fault if this stupidity and carelessness continued through the summer. Mr. Emerson's assistant [Miss Grant] expressed her feelings, at one of our meetings in the most interesting and affecting manner. . . . . The solemnity, affection, and tender solicitude with which she uttered these remarks, appeared to make a deep impression on every mind. Since that, a visible change has been in progress in the school.

The letter continues with an account of the group experiences. Yet even in the midst of this compelling atmosphere Mary Lyon is sufficiently objective to comment with a touch of her familiar humor:

This attention is entirely confined to the seminary. Imagine to yourself a little circle of about forty females, almost excluded from the rest of the human family, all appearing solemn as eternity.[11]

Of Mr. Emerson's educational ideas we get Mary Lyon's impression as their influence appears in the schools where she taught both with Miss Grant and apart from her during the next few years. Three years later she says of the Byfield course that it "supposed too much improvement" and was too rapid for ordinary minds.[12] Besides the actual studies taught, Mr. Emerson's attitude was inspiring to her in its ignoring of sex. In a memorial tribute to him, written after his death in 1834, Miss Lyon said:

If a lady advanced an opinion to which he could not assent, he did not hesitate to object because it was the opinion of a *lady;* for he appeared to believe that she had a mind capable of weighing an argument, and that she would gratefully receive the correction of an error. The tendency of the course he pursued was to inspire ladies with a modest confidence, not only in their own individual powers, but also in the native abilities of their sex . . . and to do away the assumption that they were never designed to be literary or scientific, and that they cannot be, without injury to themselves or others.[13]

That Mary Lyon gained during this summer at Byfield a new sense of education not simply as an end and joy in itself but as a means of service to others is the testimony of those who knew her at this time, a testimony borne out by the events of the years immediately following. That she took herself and this opportunity with sufficient seriousness to suit even the Emersonian standards is evident in the single extract which her biographers deemed worthy of preservation from a letter written home to her youngest sister Freelove on August 11, 1821, after a homesick vacation when Amanda White and most of her friends had gone home and she had stayed and studied alone in the great empty classroom.

I possess many facilities for improvement, but they only increase my obligation. I believe I have never before realized the solemnity of living so much as I do this summer. I often think that, if possible, it is more solemn to live than to die.[14]

In the face of such a pious remark to a younger sister, one is glad of the verbal statement, preserved to us from the small son of the

household where Mary lived that he remembered Miss Lyon better than Miss White because she was "more demonstrative, full of talk on subjects started in school and questions . . . so that she could hardly take time to eat even when she came to the table," [15] and the other Byfield family tradition that the group of girls which centered around Mary Lyon was always remembered in that home because they laughed so much.

1814-1824

The following list, compiled from a hasty memorandum on the back of a letter, written presumably by Miss Lyon in 1833, gives the school chronology of "the early years," and gives a picture of the alternate terms of studying and teaching.

1814: summer at the "Falls," meaning Shelburne Falls.
1815: summer at the "Falls."
1816: summer, "near Uncle Lyon's."
1817: summer, "near Uncle Shepard's;" also, "attended two quarters in Ashfield."
1818: summer, Buckland centre school; also, Amherst Academy.
1819: winter, "near Uncle Lyon's;" spring, family school, Buckland; summer, "near Mr. Alden's;" fall, "select school," Buckland.
1819-20: winter, "near Mr. Alden's."
1820: summer, "near Mr. Alden's."
1820-21: "winter (?) school at Ashfield."
1821: "attended school at Byfield."
1821-22: winter, Ashfield Academy.
1822: spring, Ashfield Academy; fall, Ashfield (Mr. Cross).
1822-23: winter, Ashfield (Mr. Converse).
1823: summer, Conway; fall, Ashfield (Mr. Converse).
1823-24: winter, Ashfield (Mr. Clarke).

TEACHING DAYS

Ten years of teaching came between the Byfield experience and Miss Lyon's independent move towards a future school planned on permanent lines. The manuscript material is scanty so far as letters go, but fairly abundant in study notes and other memorabilia. The printed letters, edited presumably by Hannah White as well as Miss Grant (Mrs. Banister), are abundant and informing, especially when they are separated from their context in the memoir and set in their proper order or grouping to show the program of the years. Many are only extracts. We are forced by their brevity to adopt the method of contemporary editors and bridge the gaps. It was a growing period for Miss Lyon, one in which she found her powers and used them. Our knowledge of her is enriched by every scrap of information which she unwittingly gives us in this casual letter-writing. As the Ipswich years draw to a close, we can see her contacts broadening.

VII

THEIR FIRST ATTEMPT

Miss Grant and Miss Lyon at Londonderry

Mary Lyon went back from her Byfield experience to a position excellent in those days for a woman teacher, that of assistant to the young college-trained master of coeducational Sanderson Academy, Reverend Abijah Cross. Miss Grant returned to Connecticut where she conducted a "select school," probably a subscription school for twenty or thirty young ladies, in a private house.[1] But she was soon recalled by a plea from Mr. Emerson. His pupils at Saugus were, he wrote dispiritedly, "not only more numerous, but much younger and less pious than usual." He begged for the return of one who had done more than any other young lady to "raise" his seminary, concluding with ministerial solemnity, "the united voices of earth and heaven, of present and future generations seem to call you hither."[2] Miss Grant did not heed the call for more than a year, but did return in 1823, though not for a long stay.

To Saugus came visiting gentlemen who were starting a "female academy" in Londonderry, New Hampshire, and wished a preceptress who could make the project a success. As they observed and inquired there, so the story goes, they overheard the remark that Miss Grant might be the person for them, with the instant reply, "Oh, no, Mr. Emerson couldn't spare her." No better recommendation could be found. Miss Grant went, by invitation of the committee, to Londonderry to inspect their "large and commodious building" and acquaint herself with their plans and problems. In November, 1823, the trustees offered her the position of preceptress in a document couched in stately language which wound up with the statement that she was to receive "the compensation of Five Dollars for each week the Academy shall be kept during the year, and board during the same time, and thirty-six dollars each year for travelling expenses." As the academy was to be open for only thirty weeks, Miss Grant's cash remuneration would therefore be one hundred and fifty dollars for the year; and we know that during the entire period of her stay in Londonderry she devoted the winter months to the school interests as well as teaching for the long summer session. An added

vote by the trustees allowed her to name two assistants and fix their salaries.[3]

Miss Grant wrote at once to Miss Lyon asking if she would be interested to join her. Miss Lyon's reply follows:

Ashfield, December 1, 1823.

I will not waste time in describing my feelings on receiving a letter from your own hand. I had received some indirect information respecting the academy at Londonderry before. From what I had learned of the general plan, I concluded it might be an eminent means of doing good. A few days previous to the reception of your letter, a secret desire entered my heart that you might be connected with that institution. But I dismissed it as a romantic thought. After breaking the seal of your letter, and eagerly running over the contents, said I, 'Is this a dream, or a sober reality?'

At least, my friend, I rejoice that taking the charge of this school has been submitted to your consideration. May the Lord direct you in the path of duty.

But I must say something upon the great question before me; and, indeed, I know not what to say. The academy in which I am now engaged is an infant institution. The founder, Rev. Alvan Sanderson, the former pastor of this church, was governed by the purest motives; and I consider it a privilege to aid in carrying out his benevolent designs. Many of its present guardians are my friends, and from them I have frequently received favors. This is the school where I was principally educated, and to which I feel in no small measure indebted. This school has so far been a silent, retired, and powerful means of doing good. The number of pupils has usually been small; but I believe the church will hereafter count some able supporters which she would not have had if this school had never existed. Soon after I returned from Byfield, I entered this school as an assistant. No other female teacher has ever been employed by the trustees, and they earnestly desire to secure my labors as great a proportion of the time as their funds will permit. Besides, there have been circumstances which have led me to think that my usefulness might be

more extensive here than in almost any other place of equal importance.

Yet the inducements to accept your invitation are great. It seems to be a field especially adapted to my capacity. The systematic arrangement which you propose would be highly gratifying to me, as it perfectly meets my views. Finally, the pleasure of spending time with you is truly inviting. If I am not deceived, I have taken some satisfaction in committing this subject to God. If that is not the place for me, may He give you some other one, who will be a useful assistant and a pleasant companion. I slept but little for one or two nights after I first heard from you; since that time, my mind has been remarkably calm. May the Lord direct our course. I cannot, I would not, choose for myself.[4]

Another letter must have made the invitation definite, for Miss Lyon writes again on December 30, 1823, with an acceptance from which we quote only two paragraphs:

The more I think of your plan, the more I approve it. I cannot but hope that the academy will yet be the means of much good. Should the plan succeed, the influence of example would be something. Public opinion in favor of systematic female education needs support. Every proof that system is practicable, would add its weight in the scale.

Respecting myself, the proposal did not strike my mind unfavorably at first, yet the more I think of it, the more I am inclined to decide affirmatively. The obstacles have seemed gradually to diminish, and the favorable circumstances rather brighten by examination. In relation to my own *personal situation,* the prospect, since you first wrote me, has appeared sufficiently pleasant; indeed, I fear too pleasant. I tremble more than if the path appeared more rugged. . . . . .[5]

The letter concludes on a self-distrustful note, with fears lest Miss Grant expect too much of her both personally and religiously.

The "plan" to which Miss Lyon refers appeared in local papers in the form of an announcement of the prospective school under date of

December 3.[6] The academy was made possible, it states, by the bequest of Mr. Jacob Adams. Back of that gift lies an interesting bit of educational history. Londonderry and Derry, adjoining villages in southern New Hampshire, had had a classical high school since 1793. When in 1814 it became necessary to erect a new building, there was talk between one of the solicitors and a generous giver, Major Pinkerton, as to the dependence of the school on the ability of its appointed master to make it pay. The solicitor remarked that he hoped they might some time have a permanent school. The word *permanent,* later to be one Miss Lyon's slogans, impressed Major Pinkerton, who subsequently gave five thousand dollars as an endowment.[7] Pinkerton Academy, as it was then named, had at first two departments, "male" and "female". But the desire of the trustees a few years later to separate them threatened the discontinuance of the girls' section until it was found that Mr. Adams, a "single gentleman," had matched Major Pinkerton's endowment with a four thousand dollar bequest for a female academy. Thus Adams Academy, though comparatively short-lived, gains it right to claim a certain pre-eminence in the field of women's education through being endowed at this early date for the exclusive instruction of girls. The bequest led the trustees, according to their prospectus, not only to incorporate the school but also to plan for a more systematic and thorough course than was usually pursued in the education of girls.

What was there in this plan, to which Miss Lyon refers in her letter of acceptance of Miss Grant's offer, to make her feel that it will make the academy a "means of much good" in the cause of female education? There were to be entrance requirements for each of the three regular classes, the junior, the middle, and the senior. Nor was this all. To insure the maintenance of these requirements there were to be preparatory classes, with the only admission demand the reasonable one of being able "to read prose with a good deal of correctness and to spell with considerable accuracy." Moreover, there was to be an age limit. No one could enter the junior class before she was thirteen years old.

The subjects show sequence and grading from year to year. The earlier ones are reading, spelling, defining, arithmetic, chirography, and English grammar. The middle class goes higher, beginning with the cherished book by Isaac Watts on "The Improvement of the Mind" (which will appear henceforth in every list of textbooks),

adding rhetoric to grammar, and studying a "Compend of History" and a history of New England. This group is passing the limits of common-school education. During the senior year there are real studies such as the girls' brothers are having in the better academies, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, and Astronomy, with a feminine and literary touch that "each young lady is requested to take with her such books as she has studied, Young's 'Night Thoughts,' and Thomson's 'Seasons'." A reluctant concession is made that those who have a thorough knowledge of the junior studies may receive instruction in drawing and painting. So much had to be granted for the sake of those parents who looked to such a school for "accomplishments," but at Adams they could be acquired only after the fundamentals had been mastered.

Three other points should be noted in this preliminary announcement. Instead of a treatise on ethics, there was to be study of the Scriptures, especially the historical part. Miss Grant made it a condition of her acceptance of the position that one seventh of the study time should be devoted to the Bible, a point which was to become a subject of disagreement with the trustees. Secondly, there was to be special instruction for those who wished to become teachers—this when there were no normal schools and no means for a girl to prepare herself for teaching save to study and teach, teach and study, as Polly Grant and Mary Lyon had done.

Last, but by no means least, comes the gentle statement: "It is earnestly requested that all who attend will enter at the commencement and continue during the term." The tendency of the time, combated by Miss Beecher, Mrs. Willard, Miss Grant, Miss Lyon, and all who were endeavoring to raise the standard of girls' education, was to flit from school to school at will. Here was a three-year course, with graded studies and stated terms of instruction.

The school was to open, according to the usual plan, in the middle of April and continue for thirty weeks until the middle of November, with a two weeks' midsummer vacation. Tuition in the three regular classes was at the rate of $4.00 for each half-term period.

Mr. Emerson had said to Miss Grant: "If you can put into operation a permanent seminary on right principles, you may well afford to give up your life when you have done it." Miss Grant and Miss Lyon were to make their first attempt in this little new academy at Derry.

VIII

LETTERS TELL OF ADAMS ACADEMY

1824, 1825.

We have a very pleasant school, over sixty in number, [Mary Lyon writes to her mother from Londonderry, June 5, 1824]. I find in Miss Grant all I expected. There are two assistants beside myself, Mrs. R. [Reader] and Miss C. [Chickering], and we all find enough to engage our whole time. I see nothing now but that I may pass the summer pleasantly; and I would hope that I may be in some measure useful in this institution. So many young ladies are collected here from different places to gain knowledge and form habits, which they are to carry with them to their respective homes, that it is to us an interesting spot. How important that the minds and habits of these youth should be rightly formed! [1]

The sixty pupils were, according to Miss Grant's biographer, "from the best homes of the region round about, and to be followed by a long line of others of the best blood of New England." [2] From the beginning of her teaching to the end of her long life Miss Grant was always considered the model of a "lady." The graces of manner which came only by self-discipline and painstaking attention to Mary Lyon seemed to be the natural birthright of her stately friend. Parents who left their daughters in her care counted instinctively on the power of example along the lines of culture and polish.

The wide circle from which these academies and female seminaries drew their clientele is one of the surprising facts which we come upon again and again as we scan the leaflets giving lists of scholars with their places of residence. A hand-written Adams Academy list of the year 1826 shows residents of thirty-three places, with as many students from Massachusetts as from New Hampshire, and four from Vermont, two from Maine, and actually one from New Zealand.[3]

To her friend Hannah White, the Squire's daughter, Mary Lyon writes early in July her further impressions of the school.

"Londonderry, July 2, 1824.

". . . . . The regulations of this school are such as to enable us to have much system and order. This regular system is calculated to give our pupils faithful, attentive habits. They feel that their course is marked out, and generally that whatever is assigned them must be accomplished. Composition, you know, is one of the most trying exercises. But even in this we have not had an instance yet in which any young lady has been in the least delinquent. In some respects, perhaps, this school meets our wishes more fully than any I have seen. I might mention particulars; but the beginning of all little evils in a school is whispering. Miss G. has adopted a plan to prevent this, which has been very successful. After leading her pupils to feel the importance of being truthful, and stating facts as they are, she requires each to bring in a weekly ticket with her name attached, stating whether she has, or has not, made any communication in school during the week, either by whispering, or by writing, or in any other way equally suited to divert the attention. We have some young ladies who have not made a communication of this kind since the commencement of our school; and probably none who have not passed some weeks without a failure on this point. Miss Grant, of course, would not adopt this plan unless the scholars evinced a conscience both enlightened and lively as to the distinction between truth and falsehood.

"The prospects of this school at present are very promising. The trustees take a deep interest in its prosperity. They place great confidence in the principal, and are ready to do every thing she requests. The location here not being favorable for a winter school, our academy is open only thirty weeks in a year; Miss G. devoting the winter, however, as well as the summer, to the interests of the institution.[4]

A third letter, written in the autumn to Amanda White, her Byfield room-mate, is of especial interest in giving Mary Lyon's reasoned conclusions on the Emerson educational program, with which they were both familiar. Here, too, is a mention of the mechanical diffi-

culty of keeping sixty girls supplied with pens. Thirty-six compositions written by Miss Lyon's pupils at the close of that year and treasured in the archives of Mount Holyoke College are models of chirography as well as of correct composition.

In quiet contrast to the frequent references in the memoirs to the gain which came to Mary Lyon from her association with Miss Grant is her own intimate comment to this friend who was with her when they first met Zilpah Grant at Byfield, "I think she has improved very much since you knew her." The growth was not all, then, on the younger woman's side.

Londonderry, September 26, 1824.

I am now engaged in teaching in the Adams Female Academy, Londonderry, N. H. This school commenced its operations in the spring. The plan may be called *Emersonian,* though considerably altered to meet our particular purpose. The care of the school is committed to Miss Grant. You know she is well fitted to guide, and I think she has improved very much since you knew her. She spent about six weeks here last winter, making arrangements with reference to the school. This was a very favorable circumstance. In every part of the plan I can see her design; consequently it is much more easily executed. Although, as you know, I have the highest opinion of the utility of Mr. Emerson's plan for young ladies of adult age, yet I never considered it fitted to carry a young lady through her whole course of school education; I mean, as conducted when we were at Byfield. It supposed too much previous improvement. The course was too rapid for ordinary minds, and also for such as were young, or but little improved. We have more classes, our course is slower, and the increased number of teachers will enable us to execute our plans thoroughly.

We have three regular classes, denominated senior, middle, and junior. Certain defined qualifications are necessary to enter each of these classes. Members of the senior and middle classes can attend a course of drawing and painting if they choose. We have also as many preparatory classes as circumstances require. The young ladies are examined, and are placed where it is

thought they will improve the most. They are classed, not at all according to the number of books they have studied, but according to the real knowledge they are found to possess. We have but very few under fifteen years of age who can enter the regular classes. We have this summer about sixty pupils, and we have sufficient employment. You know that Mr. E. attended to many little things in his school, which were not common in schools generally. Some, however, he was able only to recommend, and leave for the young ladies to accomplish, or not, as they thought proper. The design of Miss G. is to have every thing that is proposed for immediate attention pursued until it is accomplished; and the teachers see that it is done. This requires care and exertion. It is not a small task to instruct our young ladies in writing. Pen-making and the manner of holding the pen, I think, require one half the exertion in this department. Each is required to write with her own pen, and no one is allowed to request a pen to be made for her by any other young lady without permission. This we find not difficult. Though I should not enter into a particular detail, yet I believe you will think I have something to do. My friends, however, receive letters from me rather more frequently than when I was at Byfield; but I suppose they will even now complain.

In several branches we use a method in some degree new, commenced in Mr. Emerson's school two years since, and by him termed the *topic system*. Subjects are selected from the lesson, which are first to be simply defined; and then more or less, or all, that the book contains, is to be learned and recited.

Before coming to this place, Miss G. had tried the experiment, term after term, in her own private school, of having young ladies give daily attention to lessons from the Bible. She has great confidence in the study of this book for intellectual discipline, as well as for the guidance and control of the heart. Before she engaged to take charge of this academy, she gained the consent of the executive committee, that, in accordance with a deeply-cherished purpose, she should feel at liberty to employ one seventh part of the intellectual energies of her pupils upon what is contained in

this store-house of knowledge. While examining the classes at the commencement of the school, all were occupied in the daily study and recitation of Scripture history. Every week of the term, each pupil is expected to apply her mind closely, two hours or more, to the Scripture lesson given out early in the week, and recited the next Monday morning. This study has excited more deep and universal interest than any other.[5]

On November 18, 1824, six young ladies were given diplomas, their wording the same as that later used at Mount Holyoke Seminary, stating that each had "completed the prescribed course of study . . . and by her proficiency and correct deportment merits this testimonial of approbation."[6] This was a distinct innovation. Mrs. Willard's famous school at Troy, New York, did not then give diplomas. Such a certificate indicated a definite educational standard and set a goal for younger students. The trustees acknowledged their approval of the school during this first year by a suitable vote of thanks to the four women teachers.

Lafayette's visit to Adams Academy the following summer is another indication of the esteem in which the school was held. Perhaps he heard of it from Mrs. Willard, whose seminary he visited, or perhaps Miss Grant's fame had reached through other channels this Frenchman who was so alert to see all he could of these United States. Come he did on a June day in 1825, after the pupils had waited, in their white dresses "with bunches of natural flowers fastened in their pink belts," from nine o'clock in the morning until after five in the afternoon for his arrival. The letter in which Mary Lyon reports the event is sadly torn, but we could not spare the fragment.

The tempest without was forgotten. . . . The tremendous peal of thunder that shook the dwelling as he entered was unheeded. . . . . In speaking [to him] it was necessary to forget that one had any individual emotion or at least it was necessary to suppress all feeling for the time. Even Dr. Dana, who had for many years been in the habit of preaching to hundreds, and who was at one time president of Dartmouth College, did not speak to the noble aged soldier without a perceptible tremor of voice.[7]

A letter from Miss Chickering, another teacher, preserves Dr. Dana's words:

> "Amidst almost breathless stillness Dr. Dana told him that this was one of the public institutions in our country for the education of females, and taught exclusively by them, designed principally to give them a solid training. 'And,' he said, 'you will not refuse these young ladies, in common with others, the gratification of welcoming to our country the friend of man and the friend of America.'" [8]

"After a short address from our hero," reports one of the pupils fifty years later," one of the fairest and loveliest of our schoolmates, afterwards mother of 'H. H.', the well-known writer, presented him with a bouquet; and we were all introduced to him in turn." [9] The distinguished visitor remained for about fifteen minutes, then rode away in his four-horse carriage, with its escort of horsemen, into a rainbow while the thunder-clouds lifted across the valley and the church bell pealed its tribute.

The Lafayette visit is only an incident in a busy school year. Yet it is interesting that the Frenchman deemed female education an innovation on which he wished to make first-hand observations, and that in its second year this little school in the New Hampshire hills, with its one hundred pupils, was included in his stops.

The student whose comment we quote had come to Derry from Litchfield, Connecticut, where she had studied in Miss Pierce's well-known school, and had lived while a pupil in the home of Dr. Lyman Beecher while "Miss Catharine," who had also been brought up in that school, was there. We shall see Catharine Beecher as an educator in correspondence with Miss Grant and Miss Lyon. The familiarity which Miss Lyon later showed with other schools for girls came often from the inside, through exchange of pupils, as well as from meetings with their teachers. To this Connecticut girl we are indebted for one of the few word pictures of Mary Lyon at this period:

> "Even now," she writes fifty years later, "the firm, clear tones of her voice echo through my memory, and I see her earnest face, her keen hazel eyes, her auburn hair, and strongly marked features; the austere simplicity of her dress, and the brusque decision in every movement." [9]

IX

SCIENCE WITH PROFESSOR EATON

A letter written April first, 1825, comes not from the familiar circuit of Buckland, Ashfield, and Derry but from Troy, New York, and calls attention to Mary Lyon's association with a teacher who is reckoned one of the leading men of science of America during the first part of the nineteenth century, a man who influenced many of the pioneer science professors of our leading colleges, Professor Amos Eaton. Miss Lyon writes from Troy to Miss Grant:

I wrote to Prof. Eaton, stating my general success and difficulties in experiments in chemistry last summer. He returned an answer, generously inviting me to his house, and saying that I should do well to come to Troy, even if I could stay only two or three weeks, as he could tell me many things during that time which would be useful to me. At first, I thought it would be altogether impracticable. I had just closed my school, and wished to spend some time with my friends; but I remembered well the difficulties attending some of my experiments last summer, and thought it possible that further instruction might aid me sufficiently to compensate for the fatigue and the expense of the journey. I thought my personal gratification seemed to require that I should stay with my friends, but my duty to the school at Derry might require that I should leave them, not to see them again until next fall. At length, after suffering some trials in my feelings on this subject, I decided in the affirmative; and accordingly I packed up all, as soon as possible, and arrived here this morning.

I shall attend what lectures are given to the Rensselaer school, while I am here,—principally in chemistry and natural philosophy. I shall endeavor to review the most difficult and most important principles of chemistry, in order to avail myself of the

opportunity to gain the information which I need. I do not intend to study hard.[1]

Back of that letter lies the story not only of an interesting man but also of another educational enterprise which started at this time, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. When we find Miss Lyon a dozen years later founding the school of her own design, we shall do well to remember that she had known intimately of the founding of this school as well as of Amherst College.

Mary Lyon had come to know Professor Eaton when he was giving lectures in Amherst. A Williams College graduate, Amos Eaton had stepped outside the usual program for an educational career by returning after his college course to his home region and practising as a lawyer and land agent near Albany.[2] But his scientific interests pulled him back after a few years to study science at Yale College under one of its most distinguished professors, Benjamin Silliman, who gave him the run of his own library in addition to the class instruction. From Yale Eaton went back to Williamstown where he conducted, outside the college curriculum but evidently in close affiliation with the college, a series of lectures on scientific subjects so popular with the undergraduates that at its conclusion they themselves undertook to have them published in book form.

From this enthusiastic group of students Eaton went out to experiment with the calling which beckoned him, the popularization of science. To this end he gave public lectures, with demonstrations by experiments, in many towns and cities. We know of a course in Northampton, Massachusetts, which was said to be the first course in science ever opened to women. From its inspiration comes a little science book by a woman, a *Botanical Catechism,* issued in 1819 by one of his students, Jane Welsh.[3] From this course comes also Professor Eaton's comment that "you can generally persuade ladies to go out in small parties to the nearest open fields and collect plants for the next day's study."[4]

In the spring of 1824, a year before the writing of the letter concerning her Troy experience, Miss Lyon had been in his courses at Amherst for a brief period between the close of her winter teaching at Sanderson Academy and the opening of the first term at Adams Academy in Londonderry. Doubtless she went gladly out from his botany lectures to collect plants in the fields. But her interest turned

especially towards chemistry which was one of his specialties. In this subject she had had her first instruction years earlier at Amherst Academy, and her interest had been renewed by a chance to do some private study with young Edward Hitchcock during the previous summer of 1823. He was minister at Conway, in her own home region, and she was teaching a summer school there. Welcomed into the Hitchcock home, she studied chemistry with him and drawing and painting with his wife, the former Orra White of Amherst.[5]

The next winter Professor Eaton lectured to the college students at Amherst, as he had earlier given his courses at Williamstown. The intervening years had brought him into association with a wealthy New Yorker, Stephen Van Rensselaer,[6] patroon by inheritance of the great estates of Rensselaerwyck, a man of distinction in the political life of New York State and the nation. General Van Rensselaer had two interests in which Eaton's special knowledge and enthusiasm could serve him. His own huge properties had turned his attention to agriculture; and he was a member of the Erie Canal Commission. He listened with absorbed interest when Eaton lectured by Governor Clinton's invitation before the legislature on the practical importance to the farmer and landowner of analysis of soil and geological formations, and immediately set him to work making an agricultural survey of Rensselaer and Albany counties (1820). In 1822 and 1823 he financed the scientist in the making of a geological survey of a fifty-mile-wide belt of land extending from Boston to Lake Erie, including the Erie Canal region. Then in 1824, the year when Miss Lyon took a course with Eaton at Amherst, Rensselaer was encouraging him in the giving of these series of lectures with experiments and demonstrations up and down the country, in order that the two men might find out how much popular interest there was in subjects of this scientific but practical nature.

Eaton's success encouraged the wealthy New Yorker in another intended project, the planning and establishing in 1824-1825 of the school in Troy which was to bear his name, a school of unique character which owed much of its educational distinction to its senior professor, Amos Eaton. Its definite purpose, according to a printed circular which Professor Eaton sent to Miss Lyon in the fall of 1824, was to qualify "teachers for instructing the sons and daughters of Farmers and Mechanics, by lectures or otherwise, in the application of experimental chemistry, philosophy, and natural history, to agricul-

ture, domestic economy, the arts and manufacture." [7] On the back of the circular are two notes in his own handwriting, one of November 5, the other of November 8, 1824.

"Miss Lyon,

"We shall have at least one section of ladies to work as within. We shall change nothing for ladies of the day class *this term*. Would it not be well for you to spend the term here? You would then be well prepared.

"Yours,

"A. Eaton."

"I presume you received your apparatus in season. Mr. Howard told me, that he sent it in July. I was sorry, that I could not do you justice in regard to my attention to your apparatus. I have spent but six days at home since I saw you, until since my Castleton lectures. And these six days were divided among four visits at home.

"Yours,

"A. Eaton."

We get a hint about this apparatus which Miss Lyon may have used during the first year at Derry from the further information in the circular that those wishing to teach or repeat the experiments for their own instruction and amusement might furnish themselves at Troy with apparatus sufficient for giving experimental lectures illustrative of "every established principle of chemistry" for forty dollars; "also that the substances to be consumed in two courses of lectures may be obtained for ten dollars."

There were no "ands" or "ifs" or "buts" about the announcements of Rensselaer Institute, as there were in the somewhat ingratiating and timid statements of some schools of the period. The charge for admission to the fifteen-week course was twenty-five dollars, with a footnote as modern as the latest twentieth century college catalogue allowing for charges to cover damage to chemical apparatus. In the chemistry courses there were to be only five students in a section, these to be taught not by seeing experiments and hearing lectures "according to the usual method" but by lecturing and experimenting by turns under the immediate direction of a professor or a competent assistant. The final examination was not to be conducted by ques-

tion or answer but students were to give tests of their skill before examiners, performing experiments and giving the rationale. The men who studied with Professor Eaton during the first ten years of the Institute went out to establish similar courses in the colleges of the country.

Miss Lyon did not, of course, take this course during a two or three weeks' stay. She doubtless worked privately with Professor Eaton as well as taking the evening course in chemistry and experimental philosophy—for attendance at which "a convenient covered carriage conveyance, with inside lamps" was provided for ladies and gentlemen who boarded in Troy, the inside lamps being, we judge, a guarantee that all the proprieties were observed.

A good many gentlemen of these days talked in a large way about female education, extolling its possibilities. Professor Eaton practised it. Though the Institute did not offer formal courses for women students, he did so. In 1828 the authorities make mention of a "parallel course" for ladies that he is giving. In 1835 he set an examination in practical mathematics for a class of eight women who had completed their study of the subject, expressing at the same time his belief that women should study science and teach it. By that time he had good reason for this conviction. He had helped Mrs. Willard, who moved her school to Troy in 1821, in her science work. Indeed, she began her seminary in the lecture room of the Troy Lyceum of Natural History, an institution which Professor Eaton had founded, and continued there until her own building was completed.[8] She took lessons from him in the evenings, and he taught in her seminary until he could train women to carry on the courses which he had initiated. His *Zoölogical Syllabus* was published in 1822 especially for use in her seminary; and he dedicated his *Chemical Instructor* to Mrs. Willard and Dr. Beck, later his colleague at Rensselaer Institute.[9]

So this contact with Professor Eaton by Miss Lyon, begun at Amherst and continuing by his invitation at his own home, in Troy, is one that the best scientists of the day would have viewed as a privilege, and one that sets the stamp of one of the leading scientific educators of the time on her science course. From this time on we never find Miss Lyon without her chemistry class, provided she can manage to assemble the necessary equipment, and science became one of the specialties at Mount Holyoke.

X

HER OWN WINTER SCHOOLS FOR GIRLS

1824 ON

They do not begin with flourish of trumpets, these first schools for girls which were Miss Lyon's own. There is no academy tag, no endowment, no impressive list of trustees or backers, although within a couple of years the "A B C" towns were competing for them. We do not even know when they slipped over the line from the "family school" for boys and girls to the "select school" for young ladies. Probably, according to a list in her own handwriting, she held her first school exclusively for girls in 1819.[1]

But the real beginning came in 1824 when the minister at Buckland proposed, on her return from the first term at Londonderry, that she open a school during her free winter months. To Miss Grant she writes on December 13, 1824, hardly a fortnight after she had left her:

I ought to be thankful that Providence has so ordered it that I do not spend the winter at Derry; because I think the privilege of seeing my friends, and enjoying more society, is favorable to my health and spirits and conducive to my usefulness.

Rev. Mr. Clark, the pastor of this church, has proposed my taking a school in this place, if pupils can be obtained, and I have concluded to do so. As the school will be small, I shall not have to make exertions that will injure my health, and thus be detrimental to my usefulness next summer. I shall board with Mr. C., and feel at home in his family.[2]

To Miss Chickering, her fellow-teacher at Adams Academy, she writes two months later, giving a frank account of her difficulties as well as satisfactions—her worry over her own lack of dignity, and some "almost sleepless nights" when she was forced to discipline a

young lady whose father was too influential in the community for the girl's misconduct to be dealt with summarily.

Buckland, February 21, 1825

. . . . . My school here consists of twenty-five young ladies. After so large a number had been admitted, I had some anxiety respecting it. I feared that I might attempt more uniformity about books than, considering the circumstances, would be expedient. I expected, also, a cold winter, and my design was to have the scholars study in school. And as I possess not much natural dignity, I could foresee my scholars crowding around the fire, some whispering, some idle, &c. I remembered that, several years ago,* I had a school of young ladies in this town, in which there was more whispering than in all the schools in which I have been engaged for the last three or four years. The fault then was mine, and I knew not but that the effects might be felt even now.

I kept my school occupied on general subjects at first, and now I have about as much uniformity in books as we had at L. [Londonderry]. . . . . .

At the commencement, I thought it best to assume as much artificial dignity as possible; so, to begin, I borrowed Miss Grant's plan to prevent whispering.** All, with one exception, strictly complied; and that was one of the first young ladies in age and improvement. It appeared altogether probable that the termination of this affair would be a matter of considerable importance in relation to her, her father's family, and perhaps to the school generally. But after I had passed a few almost sleepless nights about it, a kind Providence directed the result in a manner that seemed best calculated to promote the interests of the school; for at length she came cheerfully into the arrangement.

A circumstance in relation to the first set of compositions was somewhat trying. One pupil refused entirely to write; but I was

* Probably in 1819, her first "select school," the year after her term at Amherst Academy.

** An honor system with daily reports. See page 47.

assisted in leading her to comply with the requirement. Some other things I *could* mention. Suffice it to say, that I have had just enough of such things to give me continual anxiety; but God in his providence has been very kind to me. Many events have terminated as I desired, when it seemed not at all in my power to control them. Perhaps I have generally been able to accomplish about what I have undertaken.

My school in many respects is very pleasant. I have but two or three pupils under sixteen years of age. With the exception of two or three, they are very studious. On the whole, I think it the best school I have ever had; the best, because the most profitable to its members; I do not mean the best in which I have been engaged. I have an opportunity this winter to see the value of what I gained at Derry.[3]

The problem of whispering would seem surprising among these pupils of sixteen years or over were it not for the hint given in this letter of the need on cold days for the girls to leave their desks and crowd around the fire. We rejoice for Mary Lyon that one of her Buckland schoolrooms, shown to-day to visitors, reached across the whole upper story of the house and had four fireplaces in the four corner chimneys.

A letter written that same winter to Miss Gillett, a would-be pupil from Ashfield, explains that it had been announced before this "select school" of 1824 commenced that only twenty-five would be received.[4] This girl had studied under Miss Lyon at Sanderson Academy in Ashfield when she was head assistant there. She was probably only one of many refused admission that winter, for we learn by a letter of the following December, written to Miss Grant, that when the second winter school opened the number of pupils doubled.

Buckland, December 26, 1825.

My school is larger than I expected, having about fifty scholars. . . . My heart is pained to see so much important unaccomplished labor accumulating on my hands, and I have engaged an assistant.* . . .

* Hannah White, whom she had taken back to Londonderry the previous summer as an assistant teacher.

Fourteen of my scholars board in the family with me. Before I came here, and for the first week after, I had much anxiety about the arrangements for these young ladies. We have finally become settled, so that everything seems to go on well. The members of the school in the family have a table by themselves. As I was well aware that it would require more than an ordinary share of dignity to prevent too much, if not improper, conversation at meals, I thought it the safest to introduce some entertaining exercise. This requires an effort on my part which I had scarcely realized. I frequently think, "How *could* Miss G. take care of so many last summer?" But I recollect hearing you say that your first schools were as much your all as your one hundred pupils at Derry.

My spirits have been unusually unform for four weeks. I do not recollect an hour of depression. I consider this a blessing for which I ought to be thankful.[5]

Mary Lyon was subject in all these early years to the rise and fall of her spirits, a condition on which she reports as freely to her mother and Miss Grant as on her physical well-being and her soul's state. But gradually, as the years go on, she comes to connect these emotional states with her health rather than wholly, according to the theological tendency of the time, with her lack of sufficient religious ardor.

My health has been much better since I came here [she writes to her mother in June, 1824, from Londonderry], than it was during the spring. My spirits, which commonly rise and sink with my health, are consequently very good.[6]

And again a year later (September 25, 1825), also from Adams Academy:

Although my situation is far from being unpleasant, yet there is a kind of loneliness which is ever ready to oppress my spirits. You will remember, however, that we have now our cold equinoctial storm. When this is over, much of the present gloom will be dispersed, and all our spirits will be more cheerful.[7]

In 1825 she carried the responsibility of a religious revival in the town which spread to her school. Then is expressed for the first time the fear which was to recur often in the future, even after she became the head of Mount Holyoke Seminary, lest the interest of the girls in their studies should divert them at such a critical time from concern over their souls' salvation.

The thought [she says] that some, who were beginning to think about their eternal interests, may here become so much absorbed in their studies, so much interested in the business of the school, as to exclude God from their hearts, is truly painful. I hope I may not be the instrument of hardening the hearts of those whom I tenderly love.[8]

It was a real burden that the teachers of this period carried, this endeavor to keep the balance between religious and intellectual emphasis true. We find the same concern recurring among the group who were at this very time founding Amherst College. The primary aim of education as they conceived it was to point the soul towards God, and all educational activities must be frequently tested by that measuring rod.[9] Mary Lyon had met the problem at Byfield when she was eager to throw all her energies into her studies in spite of the religious pull. Now her concern is on the other side, lest she make the studies so attractive that her young ladies will become too much absorbed in them. An interesting sidelight on her success as a teacher!

The solution came, apparently, from the students themselves. They had been brought up in families and churches where the religious principle was dominant, and were as ready to be attentive to the Bible lessons, the "ecclesiastical history," and the sermon reviews as to any other school exercises. Before this winter ended Miss Lyon had the satisfaction of writing to Amanda White Ferry, her old schoolmate, now married to a missionary in the West, that eleven in the school were "professedly pious."

Buckland, February 20, 1826.

. . . . . I can scarcely believe I have written you so seldom since you have been away. The truth is, for two years past, my time has been so constantly occupied that I now understand what you

mean, when you say that it is almost necessary to blind the eyes and harden the feelings against present and urgent calls, and calmly sit down to write letters of friendship. Besides, every thing which I could write, you will receive from other sources.

Your sister H. assists me, and we have a pleasant school of about fifty members. I enjoy so much that I sometimes almost fear that I may have all my good things in this life. We have eleven in our school professedly pious, and some of them appear very well. Some others are particularly attentive to religious truth. There is more religious attention in this town at present than usual. I have had a faint hope, through the winter, that this town and my school might be visited by the special influence of the Holy Spirit.[10]

In these two winters Miss Lyon's schools made their mark. They were to grow in numbers, in influence, and in reputation. Shortly we find neighboring towns appointing their school committees in the fall instead of the spring so that their members can make their selections from pupils in these "winter schools." [11] Before long county ministers' associations are passing resolutions in commendation of them and endeavoring to arrange for their continuance. Public education was at a low ebb in Massachusetts. In training young teachers for the district schools Mary Lyon was doing a community service a dozen years before Horace Mann founded State normal schools.[12]

But as soon as each winter school was concluded Miss Lyon went hurrying back to the thirty-week summer terms with Miss Grant, first at Adams and then at Ipswich. The two women shared the conviction that they must work together for a permanent foundation for girls' education.

XI

THE NEXT STEP

From Derry to Ipswich

What was different about Miss Lyon's seminary at South Hadley, established in 1837, from these earlier schools which she and Miss Grant conducted singly and together? Why did she consider its founding as marking an era in female education?

These are the questions in our minds as we turn the yellowed pages of century-old manuscripts. Her letters of this period seem, at first, separate and detached, reports of experiences in one school after another, with the changes of address so frequent as to be confusing. Then, few and scattered as they are, we find them falling into a pattern; and that pattern gives us the answer we value most, that of Mary Lyon herself. For its greater worth and veracity, it shows itself to be an answer written not simply in words but also in deeds. There are failures as well as successes. There is the severing of old personal ties as well as the making of new ones. Through it all there is developing, slowly but surely, a compelling educational idea.

The first attempt was made at Derry; the first set-back came there, too, a set-back to Miss Grant in which Miss Lyon shared by sympathy. As we investigate it, we discover the roots lay not in an isolated local condition, as might at first appear, but in the Unitarian-inspired, liberal movement in New England, which had its representatives on the board of trustees of Adams Academy. Letters enable us to get a picture of the circumstances.

There was a revival at the school that spring, concerning which Mary writes to her mother as early as May 20, 1826.

> We have a pleasant school of ninety pupils, thirty-nine of whom have been with us before the present year. They are very attentive and studious. Only a small proportion profess religion or hope they are Christians. Nearly eighty are living without God in the world. At this period, when so many spiritual blessings are

bestowed on literary institutions, may we not hope that ours may be among the favored number? Many Christians, parents and others, have been interested for this institution. We hope their prayers will be answered. . . .

The intelligence which we receive of the work of grace in Dartmouth College is refreshing. I hope the students from Ashfield share in the work.[1]

A letter to her sister Freelove continues the story.

Londonderry, July 4, 1826.

This day, you will recollect, completes half a century since the Declaration of our Independence. How interesting must be the reflections of those few who can remember that eventful day! And to every one, the events in our history must be an exciting theme. Who, on the face of the earth, fifty years ago, could have anticipated such results? It is true that Washington, and almost all Americans who lived in the days of Washington, hoped for independence. But did they look forward to this time, and anticipate such a nation as this? Must not all believe that "promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south; but God is the judge; he putteth down one, and setteth up another?" Must not all exclaim, "This is the finger of God?" We wonder why we are made to differ from others. Perhaps that same Being, that could with a glance look through the course of the Israelitish nation, from the selling of Joseph to the coming of the Messiah, has designs of mercy on all the nations of the earth, through the unparalleled blessings which he has bestowed on this great people. And have not his dealings with our beloved country some connection with the causes which will bring forward that happy day, to which all who love the Lord Jesus Christ are looking with earnest prayer?

Considerable attention has been devoted to the celebration of the anniversary in this place; consequently we have not been able to continue the usual exercises of the school. We have had some anxiety for our young ladies, as the scenes of the day would,

of course, be rather exhilarating. Perhaps you will wonder why there should be this anxiety. I will tell you, my sister. We believe the Holy Spirit is now with us by his special operations. It is now a very critical period. I think the school is in such a state as ours was last winter, about three weeks before its close. Seven or eight give more or less evidence of a change of heart. A few at the present time are deeply affected. Several others are in some degree solicitous, and perhaps nearly half the school occasionally inquire with interest what these things mean. The school is very different from our school last winter. We have about ninety pupils, of a great variety of character. A large number, we have no doubt, are yet thoughtless. Throughout the school, however, there is a propriety of conduct, and an interest in Scripture recitations; and when I look on their state, it seems as if "the fields were white already to the harvest." [2]

This academy which had so recently come into being was not a school with a homogeneous background of Calvinistic New England homes. In another letter to Freelove, written July 30, Mary repeats her remark about the variety of character in the young ladies.

Their habits, education, views, feelings, and principles are so entirely different that . . . there will be a great number who will feel that it is all an idle tale; a great number who will have it in their hearts to ridicule, could they but find a favorable opportunity. I have no doubt that many left the school as thoughtless as when they entered. This painful conviction forces itself on our hearts. But on the other hand, we are encouraged. . . . . When our term closed, about twenty had expressed hope; a few were anxious, while others were just beginning to ask their own hearts whether these things concerned themselves. In this state of things our pupils dispersed; and what will be the result we know not. Revivals in seminaries of learning generally terminate with the commencement of vacation. Yet there are some exceptions. . . .

Do write to me immediately, and tell me all I want to know. Give a great deal of love to our dear mother, brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces, and all my friends.[3]

(As we follow the Londonderry letters, we feel that Mary was always lonely and a little homesick for her family and friends in this New Hampshire village.)

Mary had written her mother that praying parents and friends were watching this religious activity. They were not the only ones. The trustees took note of it before the close of the term by requesting from Miss Grant herself, and through her from each teacher, a statement concerning the exact amount of religious and moral instruction given during the ten days preceding the report, including conversations with individuals. These statements, of which we have all four,[4] are definite and detailed to the point of listing seventeen minutes devoted by Miss Lyon on Monday morning to the sermon review. The time thus accounted for by each teacher does not seem excessive. Indeed, one of the teachers makes apology for having devoted so little time to these matters. There, for the time being, the matter of religious instruction ended.

Meanwhile the school was growing and prospering. To accommodate its many students it was necessary to enlarge by "cutting a door through the west side of Ely's tavern and building a genteel walk on the west bank of the house leading thereto." [5] Just what, we are moved to inquire, was a genteel walk? A letter from Mary to this same sister, Freelove, who like herself was teaching school, gives a happy picture of her own teaching with comments on the monitorial system, which was just then coming into vogue in American education.[6]

Londonderry, October 25, 1826.

"We have a pleasant school, this term, of about eighty scholars. You can understand the happy effects of a system so long continued. I can see that the same labor accomplishes more than when I first came here. At present, I am deeply absorbed in grammar and arithmetic. We are conducting both the exercises on the monitorial plan. Grammar for this quarter has just commenced. Between forty and fifty now recite at the same time on this plan. We shall occupy about an hour in the recitation. I shall devote my time as I commonly do, when we have recitations in this way. We have regular monitors appointed for grammar from the senior class. These monitors study their lessons; and for the pres-

ent, I shall devote about half an hour to them out of school. We have been attending to Adams's Arithmetic on the monitorial plan for a long time, with usual, or rather increasing success. We shall very soon lay it aside for the season. Between fifty and sixty have attended this exercise together, comprising all the regular classes except the senior class; and, indeed, most of this class have been engaged all the time as monitors. We have adopted the plan of having a regular monitor for every section, consisting of from five to twelve, according to the capacity of the monitors and of the students. Last spring, the school all attended to Colburn's Arithmetic. About a week since, seventy commenced a review. To this we devote an hour in school, our usual time for a recitation. As they are nearly together at present, I spend about half the time in asking questions to the whole, and then they are arranged in small monitorial classes. I pass from one class to another, assisting the monitors or listening to the recitations, as the case may require. This exercise is very pleasant. It is highly animating to observe seventy pupils, with the attention of all fixed on the same point at the same moment. I am fully persuaded that this is one of the best exercises to call and fix the attention of a great number.

You see, I tell what I am doing, and let the rest go. As I have begun to be so egotistical, I will just say, that I have had a most delightful time in teaching Whelpley's History: we finished it a few weeks since. Part of the time, three classes attended together, making between thirty and forty. I had some anxiety about undertaking with so large a class; but the young ladies took up the study with so much interest and resolution, that I found it more pleasant than a smaller class, and perhaps equally profitable to them.[7]

That there was trouble brewing between Miss Grant and her trustees at the close of the school term is shown by a letter she wrote to Miss Lyon in the early winter of 1827 from the home of Hannah Chickering, now Mrs. Briggs,[8] in Dedham. We quote from it because it shows uncommon feeling in one usually so reserved. Begin-

ning "My Very Dear Sister", the letter continues, after some remarks on casual matters:

> "Miss Lyon, you will not forget me; you will not forsake me; you will not leave me to labor alone. You will help me to bear my burden; you will encourage me to remain faithful to my trust; you will cheerfully unite your interest with mine to raise the standard of mental discipline in our own sex, and, both by precept and example, to inspire those who look to us for instruction with the vast importance of self-government and submission to the will of God. Though your encouragement and usefulness the present winter may indicate that it is the design of Providence to employ you in that part of His vineyard where you now are a part of each year, do not make any engagement there for summers, nor give the trustees of Ashfield any reason to expect that they can obtain you. If our way should be hedged up, there will be time for us to make further arrangements." [9]

It was no wonder that Miss Grant was concerned lest Miss Lyon chart out a separate course for herself. The trustees of Sanderson Academy had this winter turned their school over to her, allowing her to conduct it as a girls' school. Of its importance we may judge by the two following letters, written by Miss Lyon to Miss Grant in reply to the foregoing.

Ashfield, February 28, 1827.

. . . We have about fifty pupils. I find no difficulty in introducing the monitorial system. Pupils, patrons, and trustees are all pleased with it. Many of my acquaintances in this region have requested permission to spend a half day in school, and witness the common exercises; and recollecting the readiness with which I was received into the schools in Boston, I could not well refuse. I believe it is the general opinion that the school this winter is better than it was last, and this is undoubtedly on account of the more systematic plan of mutual instruction. We have most of our exercises much shorter than we had them last winter, and

more of them. In grammar, instead of one long recitation, we have two short ones in a day, on the same lesson; one to myself, the other to monitors. *My* recitation is taken up principally in general questions and remarks, and then I leave it to monitors the next half hour. In all my attempts to teach grammar, I think I can safely say that I never saw so much lively interest on the subject, among so many, as I now see from day to day. I have no difficulty in obtaining skilful and suitable monitors; there are so many pupils of judgment and discretion, who have either taught school, or are prepared to teach to good advantage.

Colonel Leavitt, of Heath, is now here, designing to spend two or three days with a view of seeing the school. I am told that no man in the county has devoted so much time to common schools as he. Indeed, he has spent almost the whole winter in this way.[10]

Ashfield, March 13, 1827.

. . . I must confess, were it not for my personal attachment to yourself, I believe I should feel an increasing inducement to devote my labors to the youth of my native hills; but as it is, I am not inclined in the least to give any encouragement of teaching here in the summer, before I shall have again seen you. There is an increasing interest on the subject of education in this vicinity. Indeed, there seems to be an enlivened, if not a new spirit extending itself respecting schools. The number prepared to teach is much greater this winter than last; and the demand from our common schools is so urgent, that I feel it to be a duty to endeavor to do something, at least *one winter* more. I have therefore made engagements to return here next autumn.[11]

That spring, after they had started a new year at Londonderry, another element entered into the situation. Miss Grant, while practising calisthenics with her girls, strained a tendon, injuring herself in a way that led to two years of suffering and inability to move without crutches.[12] For several weeks she was unable to sit or stand and could only carry on such work as she could manage from her couch. Miss Lyon had to conduct the general exercises of the school and serve as Miss Grant's deputy in many other ways. She did it cheer-

fully, writing to her sister in August that she had had this summer more vigor of body and mind than usual, with the added comment that she loved Miss Grant's society more than ever.[13]

So the term went on; and not till after its close, when Miss Lyon had gone home, did the trustees make any further move. Then they brought matters to a head by proposing, without consulting Miss Grant, to have instruction in music and dancing introduced as a part of the course the following year. At the same time, however, they voted to re-engage Miss Grant at a salary of $350 with board, also allowing her, over and above this, half the tuition fees beyond an average of sixty-five pupils.[14] This was an unusually generous arrangement, as Miss Grant must have recognized. But the vote about the new department denied her complete independence in planning her course of study. To her friend Dr. Leonard Woods of Andover, Miss Grant wrote on November 27:

> "I opposed dancing on the ground that, as we have a systematic course, and all parents would not wish to have their children learn to dance, the introduction of this exercise would of course greatly derange our plans, and must be an evil; and I finally expressed that I could not consent to do it. November 23 the committee voted that no teachers were engaged. This I did not expect." [15]

Desiring to believe that the large salary had something to do with this decision, Miss Grant wrote the executive committee expressing her willingness to accept any salary they might fix and adding that Miss Lyon would return for $6 a week and board.

There was more involved, however, than had appeared on the surface. A private circular was sent out by the committee which closed with these words:

> "It was the original design of the trustees to establish this seminary on liberal principles. They regret that the institution has acquired the character of being strictly Calvinistic in the religious instruction. This character has grown up in opposition to the sentiments and wishes of a majority of the trustees. It is their determination to select persons who will

not attempt to instil into the minds of their pupils the peculiar tenets of any denomination of Christians, but will give that general instruction wherein all Christians agree." [16]

If Reverend Lyman Beecher, then preaching in Boston, or Noah Webster or others of the group who were starting Amherst College on strictly orthodox and evangelical lines had been on the spot to express themselves in this matter, they would doubtless have insisted that the same Unitarian influence which was working its way insidiously into Harvard College and other educational and religious bodies was appearing among the trustees of this little New Hampshire academy.

An interchange of letters between the two friends follows. Miss Grant shows her distress at separating from her "dearly-beloved school" and repeats her hope that Miss Lyon will not forsake her. Miss Lyon responds with affection and devotion. Her personal desire is to be with her dearest friend, but she holds steadily to the purpose to commit herself only for summers.

Ashfield, November 26, 1827.

. . . I do ardently desire to continue with you if I can be useful; even though trials should beset us behind and before, on the right and on the left. My own trials from without have seemed to decrease with my distance from Derry. . . .[17]

Ashfield, December 26, 1827.

If you should leave Derry, my feelings and desires are all in favor of engaging with you summers. If, however, Providence should so direct that you should think it not my duty to be with you, probably a field of labor would be opened in this region. But I do not propose to make any provision, even in my mind, for *summers*, at present; for I do not mean to be reconciled to parting with you, unless I see that I must. About the winter I am not so confident. When I reflect, I can see that I have gone on here from winter to winter in a regular and advancing course; and in scarcely any sphere can I expect to be so useful. I ought not wholly to give up this field without consideration; but I entreat you not to act on the idea that I cannot be with you winters.

We have between forty and fifty pupils in school, and more are expected.[18]

Ashfield, December 28, 1827.

. . . The care I had at Derry of the conduct of two troublesome pupils in my classes caused me more anxiety than my whole school this winter. But our school is uncommonly good in this respect even for this place. It is several degrees better than my school last winter. I must confess that I have a strong partiality for pupils in this region; they are so easily guided.[19]

On January 7, 1828, Miss Grant writes: "The great question is at last decided. My connection with Adams Female Academy is dissolved," and continues, "My business, therefore, for some time, will be to scratch with a goose-quill and inform the public that I am disengaged." [20] That "the school" should stop either because of her own crippled condition or because of this trying affair at Derry seems never to have occurred to this intrepid woman.

The goose-quill was employed to good purpose. Within a month Miss Grant is writing her associate that after considering several applications she has decided to locate at Ipswich, Massachusetts.

"The place," she writes, "is considered peculiarly favorable. It is situated on Ipswich River, twelve miles from Newburyport, twelve miles from Salem, and twenty-five from Boston. It is a thickly settled village. . . . The academy is a large, new building, and, though it is not painted and has no blinds, it is well finished inside and will be very commodious. Within a hundred rods of it twenty-five families would like to take boarders for the school, and more than a hundred young ladies can be accommodated, no more than two occupying one room. . . . The place is very easy of access, from eight to twelve stages passing through the town every day." [21]

This building, we learn from other sources, had been erected three years earlier for another private school which had not been successful. The owners have finally consented to lease it free of rent to Miss Grant on the understanding that she is to provide all the instruction

and all the books and apparatus "with the exception of two valuable globes, given by a gentleman in Boston, and twenty-five dollars by one of the trustees to begin a library." As we study the financial arrangement of other schools, it seems that Miss Grant made a good bargain with the trustees. Their side of it she explains in the same letter to Miss Lyon:

> "The leading men of Ipswich wish to have a flourishing school there, partly because they wish that their building (which cost four thousand dollars) may not be lost, partly because they think it will benefit the place to draw in strangers, especially to draw in money, and partly because they wish their daughters to have the means of improvement. They think they shall supply thirty or forty natives." [21]

We note that Miss Grant estimates, probably correctly, the education of the daughters as the last consideration in their minds.

So speedy was Miss Grant in making these plans that educationally the Derry attempt did not really end, except so far as location went. More than forty of the Adams Academy pupils followed their teachers to Ipswich, thus making of the two schools a unit in pedagogical method and moral tone.

It is of interest, however, to check over the accomplishments of the Derry four years. Two hundred and sixty pupils had attended the academy. Of these 192 had stayed one year or less; 46, one to two years; 12, two to three years; and 10, three to four years. The two final records were probably unique in New England female education at the time. Twenty-six had completed the prescribed course of study and gone out with diplomas, some of them having entered with advanced credit.[22]

Meanwhile Miss Lyon was being forced to make decisions for herself.

I have told you [she writes Miss Grant from Ashfield, January 19, 1828] that the trustees of this academy consider it undesirable to break the course of a regular school through the year, by having a school exclusively for females in the winter. I have, therefore, decided to leave Ashfield after the present winter, as it

is not best I should continue longer, unless I stay through the summer.

I find that this academy, where I received so much instruction, and where I have labored so much, from time to time, has taken a firmer hold of my affections than I had supposed. It seems like bidding an old friend farewell, whom I do not expect to meet again. But He who knows how to temper the wind to the shorn lamb, has ordered all the circumstances in much mercy.[23]

We do not wonder at the trustees' decision. The winter school is evidently becoming strongly individualized as Miss Lyon's school. Their responsibility is to fulfil the purpose of the Sanderson bequest and meet the community need for a general school. Mary Lyon cannot step back into being an academy teacher all the year round. She cannot depart from the calling which is becoming more and more her own, that of teaching girls.

It is significant that she has no more idea than had Miss Grant of giving up "her school" because there must be a change of location and support. That she is already making plans to re-establish it in Buckland is shown by a paragraph in a letter from Miss Grant to Miss Lyon approving of this course. In the same letter in which Miss Grant announces the selection of Ipswich she writes:

> "Your path seems so clearly marked out for the winter that though I expect to have a school that part of the year, I cannot say I think the greatest good requires you should then be with me. I really believe that in Buckland your sphere of usefulness would be uncommonly extensive for so small a place. What you can do to elevate common schools in this section I consider of vast importance. I also fully believe that while we can labor so harmoniously together we ought to do so part of the year."

The two parallel educational enterprises are thus going on for two years more, until Miss Lyon decides that she cannot labor in two places so far apart and reluctantly gives up the Buckland school.

HER FIRST REVIVALS

A teacher with Mary Lyon's religious convictions became inevitably chaplain and minister for the students under her care, with all the responsibilities which in that day and generation those offices entailed. Miss Lyon took this part of her work with the utmost seriousness and gave herself to it with characteristic ardor. Since her letters were gathered and the contemporary biographies written with a desire to present this aspect of her life to the Christian public, it is natural that in these volumes the religious element predominates. The Hitchcock memoirs were entitled, we remember, "The Power of Christian Benevolence, Illustrated in the Life and Labors of Mary Lyon." One of the later editions was published by the American Tract Society, as was also Miss Fisk's little book of "Recollections of Mary Lyon."

This religious material is intensely interesting. Besides its immediate relation to Mary Lyon, it reflects in a vivid and personal way the church life of one hundred years ago, and especially the revival method of arousing and stimulating Christian experience. To consider it alone, without some sketching in of its contemporary background, would be to make Miss Lyon stand out as if she were a single exponent of a manner of thought and action unfamiliar to our own habits of mind, whereas she seems instead to have been one of the ablest representatives of an accepted way of Christian influence.

An outside look at the small-town revival is given by an English traveler who visited this country in 1827 and wrote home to a friend his impressions of its religious life. His description shows us what was probably taking place outside Miss Lyon's classroom in these country villages. "The most remarkable thing," he says, "about the people of this country, is their religion; at least, in New England . . . Sects and creeds, doctrines and disquisitions, preachers and people, sermons and societies, plans and projects, you may hear talked of wherever you go—in stage-coaches and steam-boats, in shops and bar-rooms, nay in ball-rooms and parties of pleasure, and in short, everywhere. But this religion is as remarkable in its character as it is in its colloquial exhibition; and the most extraordinary thing in its charac-

ter undoubtedly is the system of revivals of religion as they are called." [1]

He then goes on to explain that once in two, three, or five years it is common for a township, a village, or a city congregation, to be thrown into a great excitement about religion. The period between may be marked by coldness and indifference. Then comes an access of spiritual influence, usually through the direct and systematic exertion of the pastor. "He believes," he comments, "that all men are depraved and wicked, and deserving of unspeakable and endless misery, —that the character which they bring from their birth, which they derive from their creation, dooms them to eternal and infinite sufferings." To save themselves and their neighbors from such a fate the minister and the most zealous members of the church arouse themselves. They appoint meetings for every day in the week, to be held usually in the evening, but sometimes early in the morning. "You would be apt," he remarks, "to think, were you in some of the villages here, that the busines of society is to 'go to meeting.' " Imagination, sympathy, hope, and fear are all called into play until at last, as he says, "the very fear of not being excited, excites them." Before long the whole community is divided into three classes: the converts, the anxious, and the unconcerned, and meetings are appointed for each group of persons. Mary Lyon's phraseology varies a little. It mentions those who are "without hope," those who are "indulging a hope," and those who have "found their Savior." Only occasionally does she use the classification frequently met in revival literature of the sinners and the lost as over against the saved. There is a gentleness and tenderness in her attitude to her girls that is very appealing. She is stern with herself, but not with them.

Her own religious concern began, as we have seen, in her childhood. It was intensified at Byfield under Joseph Emerson and with Zilpah Grant. Letters of the previous chapters show her as participating in the revivals at Derry, those revivals that had their share in leading to the severance of Miss Grant's connection with Adams Academy. In her Buckland schools she began to realize the implications of her position and to worry over them. During this period of her life, when she was struggling to get her own emotional states under control, she found this kind of responsibility for others a burden, but one from which she did not shrink.

To her sister Freelove she writes, for instance, on October 25, 1826:

The influence of the Holy Spirit on schools is indeed a great blessing. It should call forth the gratitude of Christians, that this blessing is more frequently and abundantly bestowed than in former days. I trust you will not forget my anticipated charge for next winter, in Sanderson Academy, and that you will pray that we may there receive a refreshing from the presence of the Lord.[2]

To Miss Grant she writes from Ashfield, a year and more later (January 6, 1828):

. . . But I tremble lest even this winter should bear witness against me. You know that I frequently feel that I can do little or nothing to aid Christians in a life of holiness. In this respect, my responsibility is greater than ever before; indeed, it is so great, that I know not what to do. Almost half my pupils have more or less hope that they are the friends of the Redeemer. Several have indulged this hope but a few months; in some it is like the faint glimmering of a distant taper. But few can be considered established Christians; and of scarcely any have I much evidence that they possess deep feeling and a lively faith. Here we are; what shall we do? What can we do? The influence of these on each other, the influence from absorbing studies, and that which I may exert, may produce an impression which shall affect their whole lives. These precious souls have been sent here by the providence of God; but what to do I know not. I am weaker than weakness itself. May I be more and more sensible of the preciousness of the direction, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God." [3]

In spite of her fears of her own inadequacy this revival of the winter of 1828 in Ashfield grew in intensity. Seven weeks later, February 25, she is reporting on it to Miss Grant.

Every time I have written to you, I have wanted to tell you something about my school, and about some plans you proposed, which I am endeavoring to execute; but I must leave it all for this time also, while I spend a few minutes on a subject more interesting to your heart, and, if I am not deceived, more so to mine. Before my last letter to you, I thought I had reason to believe that

the Spirit of God was finding a resting-place in the hearts of some professors of religion in school. I did hope, too, that there was a secret silent influence on the minds of some of the impenitent. This continued to increase, till not a doubt remained that the Lord was indeed among us. Since last Friday morning, our schoolroom has been a solemn place. During these five days, four have had a change of feeling, which has led them to hope they have passed from death unto life. About a week before, there was one instance of hopeful conversion. Several are now deeply anxious; some are inquiring with interest, and I know of only *one* entirely unaffected. I tell you all, for we need your prayers. Our state is most critical. I do not feel it to be the time for rejoicing; but for mourning, solemnity, and deep humiliation before God. I fear, first, lest *I* shall grieve the Spirit; and then I fear for the friends of the Redeemer here.[4]

Another letter to Miss Grant, March 18, completes the story.

I have this day parted with my dear pupils. Since I last wrote you, my labors have been greatly increased; but that they have been thus increased, I consider one of the greatest blessings I have ever enjoyed.

When our school commenced, I had a faint hope that the Lord would visit us by his Holy Spirit. But on viewing my own heart, I felt that I had very little reason to expect it. There I found an apathy, chilling and distressing. It seemed almost as if the fallow ground could not be broken up. I felt that I was taking on myself a great responsibility; but what to do I scarcely knew; and the little that I did know I was very poorly prepared to perform.

The first week I made a separation in the school after the plan that you have generally practised. To my surprise, nearly twenty were found, who, in some form or other, indulged a hope that they were the friends of God. This affected my heart. The responsibility of attempting to do something for their spiritual improvement rested on my mind with an indescribable weight. It seemed to me that something must be done; but I felt that I could do little more than endeavor to ascertain something about

them individually, and attempt to commit them to God. You know that this is a field of labor which I have generally avoided. I felt myself like a little child, without resolution, without strength, without experience, and without wisdom. During my life, I have done very little for the growth of Christians; but through the mercy of God, I humbly hope, that, during the present winter, I have been enabled to labor rather more in this field, and that I have labored more successfully.

For several weeks, my desires for the impenitent were faint and few; and almost all I met, either in school or out, appeared to partake of the same spirit. I used to say to Miss W. [Hannah White] that if the Lord should visit this school, we must always remember it as one of the most wonderful displays of his power, which he sometimes condescends to make. We would recount the scenes of Buckland, and contrast some, who, from the commencement of the term there, seemed to pray the prayer of faith, with those in this school who were the most interested for the salvation of souls; and we would say, "There is no prospect of a revival, for this is not the way that God generally works;" and then my heart would sink within me. Thus I lived on, week after week, till more than half the term was gone. But while man looketh on the outward appearance, God judgeth righteous judgment. I now believe that the eye which saw seven thousand in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal, has seen the effectual prayer rising continually from some hearts in towns around us, though I knew it not at the time.

The work started, she goes on to relate, with the visit of a neighboring minister, who came to take his daughter home on account of sickness in the family. (This daughter he felt to be "without God and without hope.") He expressed to Miss Lyon a great interest in the school on account of its influence on society, and on account of its containing so many teachers for district schools for the ensuing summer, and then went on to say that he had been anxious for its spiritual prosperity. The word impressed Miss Lyon. She later came to feel that the prayers of this good minister and of others outside the school had their effect in the change which began to show itself. The letter goes on to tell of the daughter's return after an absence of three weeks.

She found the influences in her room entirely changed. Her three companions, young ladies from the same town, were all rejoicing in hope. They had been ardently desiring her return, and now they could not see her willing to reject the Savior. She was immediately affected; but I did not dare to hope, for a while, that it was any thing but sympathy. Soon, however, her tears were exchanged for a solemn and distressed countenance, which bespoke deep, heartfelt sorrow. For a few days, her distress was great. Though generally very much inclined to converse, she would pass the whole morning without speaking a word; and her young companions, though possessing all the joy and ardor of young converts, were awed into silence; and like Job's friends, "none spake a word." In eight days after her return, she was brought to rejoice in a blessed immortality.

During the whole winter, Scripture recitations have been uncommonly impressive, compared with the means used to make them so. This interest was most manifest, when the subject was a solemn one, such as "the mercy seat;" "the thunderings of Mount Sinai," &c. During some of these still and impressive exercises it did seem that the effect must remain; but the first recess would carry it all away. It was not till about the middle of the term that I became sensible that professing Christians were more awake, and felt more deeply their responsibility. . . . The first of the tenth week I was convinced that the Holy Spirit was indeed among us. From this time, with a very few apparent interruptions, the work went forward with a regular and increasing advance till the very last day. About twenty expressed hope in the Savior, six or seven left without hope, of whom two were not deeply affected. One of them tried to be interested, depending on her own efforts, but her efforts were in vain.

The work was very still; so much so, that many in the town knew scarcely any thing about it. Our school exercises were as usual. Many of our friends, who visited us, observed nothing to mark this as the place where the Spirit was operating so powerfully, except a general stillness, and here and there a deeply solemn countenance. But to us, connected with the school, the work has

appeared great and wonderful. We have daily said to each other, "Can this be true?" It has been carried on so independently of means, that we have frequently felt that our best hopes might easily be blasted, and as frequently that the Lord could work and none could hinder. We have all had the conviction daily, that this work is wholly of the Lord. The effect of this revival, on those who indulged a hope at the commencement of the school, has been favorable. Many of them seemed to leave the school with a much higher sense of their obligation to labor continually for the kingdom of Christ.[5]

That was the touchstone for Miss Lyon of the success of a revival, as of any similarly intensive educational effort. Did it send those who experienced it out with a higher sense of their obligation to render service to the world?

It is interesting as a parallel to find Miss Beecher meeting in these same years the same problem. She had been brought up on revivals, her father, Dr. Lyman Beecher, being one of the most successful revival ministers in New England. Not the least interesting of the Beecher memorabilia are the pages in his autobiography which show him giving advice and direction to Catharine as to the methods for conducting a revival in her school.[6] She had evidently come to feel the need of some such activity during the year 1826, when he was sweeping Boston with his evangelistic efforts. He advises her, in answer to her inquiries, against a very high state of excited feeling as too hazardous to health to be indulged by young Christians and too short-lived to answer the best purposes, cautioning her especially to cultivate a quieter state of feeling in herself, lest she be prostrated by her efforts. Such a state he describes as "a fullness and strength of desire, which does not ruffle the passions, and is compatible with the most cool and collected state of mind, both for planning and for action, and, at the same time, predisposes for earnest prayer, and for speaking to stupid and awakened sinners a word in season."

Miss Beecher did her best, but three years later she was begging Miss Grant to come and serve as chaplain with her, since she feared that in spite of all her efforts the religious interests of her school were being neglected in the interest of the social, literary, and administrative. Miss Lyon learned in the years to carry on both lines of leadership, though often at a heavy cost to her health.

XIII

THE IPSWICH YEARS

Surveying Mary Lyon's life as a whole we see Ipswich as an experiment station. Here were tried out many of the pedagogical methods which were later to come to fulfillment, though on a different basis and with a different social pattern at South Hadley. Here during Miss Grant's long absences Miss Lyon gained assurance and became familiar with what her life would be if she continued as teacher and principal of such a school for girls. Sheets containing expense summaries show that she had to take on all the financial business of the school, with its treasurer, Mr. George W. Heard. A series of letters in the years immediately following her separation from this school indicates that Miss Lyon's own salary was often involved in transactions with Miss Grant. It was a long time after her departure before she was in receipt of all that was apparently due her in some of these money arrangements between the two friends and co-workers.[1]

The years brought contacts with many educational people. Distinguished visitors from abroad came to see Miss Grant's school which was acquiring a high reputation educationally. During one of her periods in charge of the school Miss Lyon writes to Miss Grant:

> . . . Messrs. Reed and Matheson, from England, were here last Thursday evening. I regretted exceedingly that you were not present to answer for the school yourself. Mr. M. was in the school a short time in the morning, and Mr. R. just before they left town.[2]

Jacob Abbott, teacher and editor in Boston, known to later generations chiefly as the author of the Rollo books which he was soon to write, was in frequent touch with both principals. He had left Amherst College, where he had been, first, tutor and then, professor of mathematics and natural philosophy (1824-1829), and was at this time conducting "The Mount Vernon School for Girls in Boston."

We have his letter asking for an article for his magazine, from either Miss Grant or Miss Lyon.[3]

The contacts of a school near Boston were all gain for a country-bred school-teacher. Lowell Mason, who was introducing into Boston schools a new method of teaching vocal music by the Pestalozzian system, as well as exerting a great influence on American church music, came out from Boston to teach in this school.[4] It is of his work that Miss Lyon is doubtless speaking when she writes to Miss Grant on January 29, 1832:

Ever since vocal music was introduced into our seminary, I have had an increasing sense of its great practical importance. By our influence, and the influence of our pupils on this subject, probably hundreds may be benefitted for a succession of generations. Those who have been able to sing from childhood, do not know by experience the feeling which *some* have who cannot sing. When passing near the music-room last summer, and thinking that a large part of the choir, probably had no more of a natural voice than myself, I found it necessary to restrain, with firm determination, a rising murmur. I have sometimes felt, that I would have given six months of my time, when I was under twenty, and defrayed my expenses, difficult as it was to find time or money, could I have enjoyed the privileges for learning vocal music that some of our pupils enjoy.[5]

Into the Ipswich school both Miss Grant and Miss Lyon poured their ideas and efforts. With unquenchable optimism they hoped each year, as increasing numbers of girls flocked to them, that this might become the school of their dreams. In the later years Miss Lyon came to feel, as her letters plainly show, that the Ipswich mould was not big enough and that she must go out alone and start an educational enterprise after her own pattern. But the years in this seacoast town were both useful and full of interesting experiences.

From its opening day the school attracted large numbers. In a letter of the second year Miss Lyon remarks: "We have a respectable number of scholars, though not such an immense multitude as we had last year." [6] For all these schools of Miss Grant's and Miss Lyon's the success from the point of view of numbers was annually almost

their undoing because of the problems of housing and supervision. In Miss Lyon's home town Buckland friends of her winter schools had seconded her desire to welcome as many girls as sought the privilege of higher education by stretching their accommodations to the utmost and charging those whom they welcomed into their homes only a shilling a week for board.[7] In Derry Miss Grant had searched out suitable homes where girls could be boarded at the standard rate (as announced in the catalogues of most seminaries and colleges of this period) of $1.25 to $1.75 per week.[8] When she came to Ipswich Miss Grant was told that there were within a hundred rods of the building twenty-five families who would like to take boarders for the school. The two principals were at first received into the home of one of the ministers. By 1830, when the school enrolment had risen to one hundred and forty, a large house a quarter of a mile from the school building was taken over for the teachers and for out-of-town girls. Here lived many of the thirty Buckland girls who had followed Miss Lyon to the new school.[9] A word about this housing problem is pertinent because insistence on the need of a dormitory becomes from this time on one of Miss Lyon's chief crusading points for the new and ideal future school.

For the proper supervision of the students and the unifying of the school life, Miss Grant devised, and during her long absences Miss Lyon administered, a system of "sections" with eighteen or twenty girls under the care of a teacher, a system which was perpetuated in name, and to a certain degree in substance, in the rooms and "spaceways" of Miss Lyon's South Hadley building. Each teacher was to meet her section every day and acquaint herself fully with every detail of their lives, intellectual and social, not to say moral and religious, as well as to instruct them in matters varying from "how to write, fold, and superscribe a letter" to chronology (a favorite subject of the time taught by a series of cards with dates), and the geography of Palestine. To assist the young teachers in this supervision there were more than forty "regulations"—they were never called "rules"—including not only "Regulations Positive" but also "Regulations Negative." These ran from the obvious boarding school requirements of not going to the postoffice without permission, not reading socially or studying on Sunday without permission, and not conducting themselves improperly in the street, as by loud conversation, to others with quaint flavor of the times—not to eat green fruit, not to purchase eatables excepting

fresh domestic fruit and oranges, and not to leave down the bars when crossing fields.[10]

Since teachers could not be omnipresent and self-government was always Miss Grant's aim and joy, observance of these regulations was accompanied by an honor system of reporting. With this system Miss Lyon wrestled during Miss Grant's absences. In her correspondence as preserved in the Mount Holyoke archives are some of the little report sheets which she received weekly. One testifies to the utter correctness of a single week in the life of Rebecca Gooding.

> "During the past week I have had my chamber in order seasonably, and have kept it so through the day; and both morning and evening of each day I have devoted the study half-hour according to the plan prescribed, and the half-hour for retirement I have spent in my room alone; I have called at others' rooms and doors only at the time specified; I have spent my recreation hours in accordance with the general plan; I have neither lingered nor made unnecessary noise in spaceways nor in the family rooms, and, I believe, have uniformly behaved with propriety.
>
> Rebecca E. Gooding" [11]

A similar report from Sarah Simpson covers the same ground but ends with a fall from grace:

". . . have walked out but once without Miss Farley's approbation, and, with the exception of laughing once at table, have behaved with propriety." [11]

One more "document," a letter written to Miss Lyon, will help to give the picture of the means by which Miss Grant aimed "to exercise over the young ladies both in and out of school, the same care and supervision as if they were her own daughters."

Ipswich, July 13, 1830.

"My Beloved Teacher,

"According to your request I have now taken my rest in my little chamber, for the purpose of letting you know how

and when we arrived here, for I know you must have felt anxious especially for our stage, but let me assure you, I wished a great number of times that you could have been with us, and witnessed the propriety with which the young ladies conducted themselves. There was no excitement manifested until we arrived in Boston when for a few minutes our two Caroline's manifested a *very* little but stopped the instant they were reminded of it. Soon after we lost sight of Ipswich and were in rather a lonely place Caroline Parsons and Sarah Whitman commenced singing in a low voice, but soon stopped. With that one exception I saw nothing that I think you would disapprove of. Although when they were in Ipswich they used to talk sometimes, still in the stage they manifested love for you Miss Grant and the school. . . .

Your affectionate pupil
M. E. Stuart" [12]

What would Amanda White have said if she could have seen the room-mate after whom she picked up conscientiously at Byfield receiving such reports concerning the tidying of a room? Did Miss Lyon herself sometimes remember back to the days when her early teaching efforts were criticized in the neighborhood because she laughed too much with and at her pupils?

The first difficult year of the Ipswich school was complicated by the unusual circumstance of an illness of Miss Lyon's as well as Miss Grant's. During the midsummer vacation of 1828 the two went together to visit friends in Connecticut. In the midst of serious discussions of educational problems it is pleasant to find Miss Grant, when this visit was first contemplated, advising her friend to wear her Gros-de-nap gown, and telling her that her Leghorn bonnet will be as good for wear at Ipswich as a new one, with mention also of a kind of superfine gingham, "very fashionable now," which she might prefer to plaid silk.[13] But this long-anticipated visit, when finally carried through in midsummer, had serious results. Immediately on their return both women were taken with "typhus fever." Miss Grant was laid up for nine weeks, through August

and September and into October. Miss Lyon was for a time scarcely less ill, and was not fully recovered when she left Ipswich in November to prepare for her winter school at Buckland. Of the severity of this illness we may judge by a comment made by Miss Lyon in a letter to Miss Grant written the following February.

You remember that, after my sickness last summer, my hair came off by handfuls. For several weeks past I have not lost any, so that I hope I shall continue to have enough to support my combs. For a while my head was very cold; but since I began to wear a turban, it has been quite comfortable.[14]

This was the beginning of the wearing of the turban which we see in an early Mary Lyon portrait. The style of turbans as feminine headgear had begun, it is said, when Mrs. Madison in the White House had introduced them early in the century during a time when there was a craze for all things Oriental. Mary Lyon found the style convenient because she could wind the length of cloth about her head so quickly. She did not discard this headdress until her Mount Holyoke daughters persuaded her to do so, and by that time, since she was at the advanced age of nearly forty, she substituted the cap which her girls thought more becoming.

The Ipswich school went on with both principals in action until 1831 when Miss Grant's health gave way. "Heroic treatment" of the limb injured in Derry had finally wrought a local cure, but the diet prescribed by the doctors towards this end had been so meager as to reduce her almost to emaciation. She was forced to give up her active leadership and begin that absence in the South and West which was to last a year and a half.

Miss Lyon took charge of the seminary and carried it on ably and to her own lasting good in experience of leadership. But the care, combined with the endless reporting to Miss Grant, told on her. The summer of 1832 was particularly hard, as several letters show. Here is one of July, a month when nowadays we discontinue our schools because of the heat.

Last week my labors were unusually fatiguing, and of course I had a headache generally in the morning, which once or twice

continued all day. I do not think it will be so this week. I have had a few difficult cases, imperatively requiring much personal effort, besides some labors in school which necessarily demanded the last particle of my intellect and feeling, till I seem to have just physical strength enough to bear me home, just intellect enough to think the thoughts of a little infant, and just emotion enough to tremble under the shock. I had been delaying some time for a convenient opportunity to make as great an effort as I was capable of making, on the subject of conscientiousness in giving in accounts. . . .

For a few days I have had a trying languor and stupidity, especially yesterday. How much of this I should attribute to the fatigue of the last week, I know not; but I doubt not that much of it may be ascribed to my own barrenness of soul. . . . Sometimes my instruction in school is so barren and disconnected that it distresses me all day long.[15]

The few pedagogical extracts from letters of this period bear testimony to instruction that was far from "barren," as do some precious notebooks giving students' digests of her classroom talks.

December 28, 1831.

For a few weeks I thought it might be a good plan to allow but a very little time for general instruction, except what is of immediate necessity to carry forward the business of the school properly. This was a reason, in connection with many others, for my taking a class in Watts on the Mind. I consider it a privilege to teach this book. I rejoice more and more that I have undertaken it. This exercise requires less care than I anticipated. I have not yet had time to study my lessons as I desire; but I have been able to read them over, and investigate so much, that I could meet my class with a good deal of freedom from embarrassment. I have as yet heard only three recitations. This, for the present, answers instead of general instruction for almost half the school.[16]

March 18, 1832.

We are trying an exercise in connection with Grimshaw's

Etymology. I wish some way could be contrived to have the English language studied with as much intensity as the Latin is. I have a few floating ideas upon this subject. I hope I shall do more next summer than ever before to enrich the minds of our pupils with a store of English words associated with the ideas which they were designed to communicate. I do think that there is a deficiency on this point; but how to remedy it is the great question.[17]

In this connection we insert two notes to Miss Grant (as edited in the memoirs) belonging to this period, though written, the first from Philadelphia, the second from Detroit, when Miss Lyon was on her vacation trip in the summer of 1833.

July 10, 1833.

I do not think highly enough of ————'s Grammar to use it again. There is a lack of elevation and character about it. It is more like the work of a smart, ingenious *schoolmaster*, than of a man of fine literary taste. ————'s Grammar is too much of the same character. What do you know about ————'s Grammar? I have had it in my heart to examine it as thoroughly as I am capable of doing, but I have not done it. I do not, however, expect to be satisfied. He is too loose a writer to make a good grammar. He may possibly have done more to make this edition what it should be than he did the first; but a man that can write a book for children loosely can scarcely be expected to make a grammar what it ought to be.[18]

September 18, 1833.

I agree with you that "the manner in which recitations are heard has a great effect on the mental discipline of the scholar; and in this point our teachers should excel." Can we not do much to promote this object the coming winter?

I am in doubt as to what grammar it is best to use in our lower classes.

Besides requiring a thorough knowledge of good old Murray, embracing a clear understanding of all his notes and remarks, I have a query whether we ought not to include, as essential to com-

pleting our course, an ability to criticize in a philosophical manner his erroneous Latinisms; a knowledge of the particular resemblances and differences between Murray and our preparatory book; and an ability to arrange the differences under two heads, essential and non-essential. Finishing with a book of such an elevated style as that of Murray's Grammar, it would not be so great an evil to have the style of our preparatory book ordinary. What a pity that in our late primary school books there is not more of *elevated* simplicity!" [19]

An earlier letter belonging to the Ipswich period, though it happens to be written from Ashfield, is valuable in its educational content and its comments on textbooks. The manuscript which we have is apparently the first draft of a letter of advice to some young teacher in a district school.

Ashfield, March 20, 1830.

My dear Miss Cole,

So far from having forgotten you, you are very fresh in my recollection.

I am fully convinced that a multiplicity of studies, especially at the commencement of a school is detrimental to improvement. Grammar is generally commenced too early, & arithmetic, deferred too long. Nothing is gained by having scholars commence chirography very young; but when they do begin, they should pursue it carefully & systematically. If— Even where scholars are very much improved, I would not have them study grammar under 12 or 14 years of age, unless it be on the improved plan of Smith, or some other improved system. Besides reading and spelling, which should receive much attention, & some other general things, I consider two regular studies at a time quite sufficient for scholars generally. After reading, spelling etc., or rather in connexion with them, I should introduce arithmetic & geography. Before thay should have pursued geography so long as to become very much tired of it, I would exchange it for history; & again after a few weeks, I would drop history & resume geography. Thus these two studies might happily alternate, till a good knowledge of

modern & ancient geography & a good outline of history were acquired. For arithmetic, I would first introduce Colburn's First Lessons. After pursuing this, till by studying & reviewing, many of the school should understand thoroughly as much as half of the book, written arithmetic might be taken in its stead, for all or for a part of the school, as circumstances might require. After a few weeks mental arithmetic could be resumed with new vigor. Holbrook's Geometry is an excellent little work. It might take the place of arithmetic for a while, & would furnish a very pleasant & profitable variety. When grammar should be introduced, it might take the place of arithmetic. Thus by this plan, the pupils would have but two regular studies at a time, & these two would be unlike in their effects on the mind, the one being geography or history, & the other arithmetic, geometry or grammar. After pursuing these branches to considerable extent, the more improved scholars, might exchange one study for Conversations on Natural Philosophy.

If you should have any beginners, Peter Parley's Geography is excellent to precede Woodbridge's, or some other work. This little work is published in Boston, price about 75 cents, including maps. To render history interesting & profitable, it is exceedingly important, that the plan of instruction should be good. On few subjects, do teachers fail more than on this. I consider it generally best to commence with modern history rather than with ancient. Mrs. Trimmer's England is good for beginners. Goodrich's United States is greatly improved by Emerson's Supplement & Questions. For ancient history, Goldsmith's Greece & Rome are good. For scholars of considerable improvement, Worcester's Elements with his Chart is an excellent text book, but some other work should always be read in connexion. In adopting books, you must undoubtedly be guided in some degree by circumstances, though it is exceedingly important to have uniformity. Whelpley's Compend, though defective, I consider a profitable book, if well taught.[20]

Deaths in Mary Lyon's family added in these Ipswich years their burden of sorrow and care. In September, 1832, her sister Rosina

(Mrs. Ellsworth) died in New York State. Years before, after Mary had decided not to go back with her brother Aaron to teach in that region, Rosina had done so, and had soon married there. The news of her death came at six one morning. At half-past eleven of the same day Miss Lyon was sent for to see a student who lay, after a period of illness, at the point of death. She sat by the bedside most of the time till the girl died at four o'clock,—truly a day to try the strongest soul! Of it she writes to Miss Grant:

Ipswich, September 15, 1832.

A letter arrived this morning, stating the death of my dear sister Ellsworth,—Rosina, you have heard me call her. She was a very dear sister to me. . . . This event of Providence is peculiarly suited to touch the tender cords of my heart. She was a kind of darling among us all, and among others beside our family friends. She has left four little sons. . . .

I went to school this forenoon as usual. About half past eleven I was sent for to see Miss Kingsley. I sat by her dying bed most of the time till four o'clock, when she fell asleep in Jesus. Some of her dying words and her dying prayers we will send you. It has been one of the most precious seasons I have ever enjoyed.[21]

Mary's older sister Lovina (Mrs. Putnam) had been for three years at the Insane Hospital at Hartford, taken there by her own desire because of periodic spells of acute mental trouble. All summer she was growing worse and in early October she died. The letter in which Miss Lyon reports the event is calm and serene, showing relief at the release from suffering.[22] Letters of this period show her as taking thought for these three Putnam children, as the father, too, was ill. As early as 1830 she was making financial arrangements with Major Joseph Griswold of Buckland for their care, drawing evidently on her own resources to some extent.[23] It is a sad sequel to this family story that it was one of these Putnam boys who committed suicide in a period of insanity, while he was a student at Williams College in 1847. That death, reported to Miss Lyon when she was herself already ill, was believed to have precipitated her death.

Rosina's children, too, we meet again in the later years. In 1833

Miss Lyon visits in that motherless home in western New York. In 1847 the son, Stukely Ellsworth, goes up from Yale College to visit his aunt in South Hadley. From Ipswich days on we find nieces in Miss Lyon's schools, frequently with their tuition paid by her. A letter written in this year 1832 to Abigail Moore, daughter of her oldest sister Electa, who went to Ohio and was there widowed, introduces us to this gifted girl, at this time nineteen years old, who was Miss Lyon's special helper and assistant at Mount Holyoke Seminary. To her she writes:

My dear A.:

In advising you what course to take in future, I should be guided very much by your own views and feelings about giving up yourself to do good—to do all you can to render those with whom you may be connected better and happier. I used to think much about leading my friends to endeavor to educate themselves, that they might take a more respectable position in society. This is comparatively of little importance. There is a great work to be performed before that time shall come which is foretold, and many hands are needed to be employed in this work; not only those of ministers and missionaries, but also of females. The labor to be done seems greater and greater every year; perhaps I may say every month and every week. How much is to be done by influence, in a variety of ways! How much prejudice to be removed! What an almost endless catalogue of evils exists among the middle-aged and youth of the present generation! And the children will follow on in their steps, unless some greater and more powerful influence is used. I do most ardently desire that laborers may be raised up, possessing willing hearts and a self-denying spirit. Teachers of the right character can do much.

Now, my dear niece, will you not, in a measure, forget self, and decide to give yourself wholly to the service of the Lord, to labor in his vineyard, wherever he shall call, and "whatsoever you do, to do it heartily as unto the Lord, and not unto men?" If this is your decision, and you have evidence that you possess a tolerable aptness for teaching, and can obtain your mother's consent, (do nothing without your mother's consent,) I should think

it might be your duty to make even a great pecuniary sacrifice, in order by that means to be prepared to do the greater good. You need that skill in exercising moral power over others which you cannot possess without a thoroughly cultivated mind, and cultivated on the best principles. If your object is to devote yourself wholly to the service of God, and to labor to promote his glory by increasing human excellence and human happiness, I advise you, by all means, to bear the expense of the journey, and come here to school. . . .

Your tuition will be twenty-five dollars a year, I will give you enough to pay your tuition bills while here, without any charge, except the charge in Heb. xiii.16. I should be glad to do more for you in this way, but, consistently with prior obligations, I cannot. I will endeavor to help you plan and economize, and if it should be best that I should *furnish* you with more funds, I should expect that you would pay me interest and principal when able.

May you be guided in the path of duty, which is the path of peace.[24]

That Miss Lyon was not overwhelmed in that fall of 1832 by her personal cares and griefs or by the cares of the school in Miss Grant's long absence is shown in a letter to Miss Grant.

A week ago I mailed a letter to you, which was a little later than I designed, on account of a severe cold. I have now quite recovered. Goodness and mercy follow me continually. I feel so well every morning when I rise that I do emphatically *enjoy* health. I never was more sensible of enjoyment from this source.

My daily business connected with school is peculiarly sweet and delightful. I do not think I ever did love a school so much in so short a time. I do not know how it is, but every thing is so pleasant. From duties in prospect I have none of that shrinking which I often have. There is an unusual evenness and uniformity in my feelings, freedom from excitement, or any rising above the level. My cup is full and running over, and every future labor or future

scene, seems all that I could desire. I often say to myself, "How sweet are my labors! how sweet is life!" [25]

The memorabilia of the Ipswich years are many-sided. We are tempted to linger over the notes of courses and assembly talks given by Miss Lyon. As a teacher she had already come into her own. For the girls who are going out to teach district schools there are practical and epigrammatic bits of advice. For the girls who are going at once into homes of their own there are equally practical ethical and social instructions on health, marriage, and home-making. The emphasis at Ipswich was strong on training the students to be good mothers. The imposing heading "Intellectual Philosophy" proves to cover, among other things, discourses on the Ten Commandments which include a talk on sex education that is remarkably free and open for those days.[26]

But during all the Ipswich years Miss Lyon had been carrying on, along with her school interests, another set of activities connected with her broader educational purposes. Now with her we must turn our thoughts to the "future labor," the "future scene," which is already looming up before her.

1824-1834

1824: Summer, Adams Academy, Londonderry, N. H.
1824-25: Winter school at Buckland.
1825: Spring, trip to Troy, N. Y.; summer, Adams Academy.
1825-26: Winter school at Buckland.
1826: Summer, Adams Academy.
1826-27: Winter, Sanderson Academy, Ashfield.
1827: Summer, Adams Academy.
1827-28: Winter, Sanderson Academy.
1828: Summer, Ipswich Seminary; vacation trip to Connecticut.
1828-29: Winter school at Buckland.
1829: Summer, Ipswich.
1829-30: Winter school at Buckland.
1830-31: At Ipswich with Miss Grant.
1831-33: At Ipswich, in charge during Miss Grant's absence.
1833: Summer in the West.
1833-34: At Ipswich, Miss Grant absent in the summer.
1834: Autumn, leaves Ipswich.

MARY LYON

From a miniature painted in 1832

TOWARDS A FUTURE SCHOOL

The question is often asked in these days, as it was one hundred years ago, "How did Miss Lyon's plan differ from that of other good schools of the time?" This group of letters, printed and in manuscript, gives the answer. It shows Mary Lyon discovering that she must step outside the accepted pattern for the female seminary of her time if she would achieve her objective. She had to learn, as other heads of schools learned in this period, that there was not sufficient ground for appeal in the customary, high-class private school program to make benevolent persons willing to give a suitable sum towards its endowment. In the Ipswich effort and the Amherst attempt she learned this lesson. Then she adapted her objective to make it carry an appeal to a larger public. The "middle income" group was the one for whose ambitious daughters she felt "a fire burning in her bones." To this group she must turn, too, for the support of her project.

XIV

THE FIRST APPEAL FOR ENDOWMENT

Ipswich, 1831

Only a calendar of dates culled from the correspondence between Miss Lyon and Miss Grant can make us realize the uncertainty of their plans from year to year. Just when it seems as if a school were succeeding, we discover that they are being forced to look beyond its present condition, either to another location or for a different means of support. When Miss Lyon wrote in 1832 to her friend Dr. Hitchcock her doubts as to whether any existing school for girls even though of a high character was destined to outlive its present teachers, she was voicing a sentiment that had been forced upon her by her own experience and observation.

Reviewing for a moment her own winter schools, we see from her letters that their success from the point of view of numbers made them outgrow year by year the facilities for teaching and housing in the villages where they were held. In Buckland there were in her first year (1824-1825) twenty-five young ladies. The next year there were fifty. Then she had the use of Sanderson Academy for two winters. On her return to Buckland in 1828 she had seventy-four pupils, twenty-five living in one house. The next fall she went back to be met with a still larger enrolment of ninety-nine. Of this school she says (November 18, 1829): "Though my school is such as to involve great and increasing responsibilities, yet some things are encouraging. I have quite as many of mature age in school as I have ever had, and I think quite as much improvement." [1] But the work of carrying on such a school practically single-handed, with only her newly trained pupil-teachers, was proving almost too heavy for her. A severe cold prostrated her at the beginning of that term, threatening a repetition of the illness of the summer of 1828 at Ipswich. This letter shows her considering the problems.

November 30, 1829.

I have just had an interview with Rev. Dr. Packard of Shel-

burne. He waited on me to express the wish of the Franklin Association of ministers, that I would continue in this region. He took up the comparative importance of my labors here and with you. I did not succeed in my efforts to lead him to look directly at the two important points: one, the great difficulties of my laboring in two places, and the other, that I am pledged to you for summers. He brought no argument to prove that I ought to labor in both places, but, like many others, urged that I ought to labor here both winter and every summer.[2]

In a letter of an earlier year Miss Lyon has said that she should not feel justified in leaving that region except for "obvious and sufficient reasons." This illness and the failure of Major Griswold and other Buckland friends to provide her with a suitable building, in spite of real efforts to do so, furnished at last the reason for the decision which she had put off from year to year. On December 9, only ten days later than the letter above-quoted, she writes, "It is fully understood that I leave Buckland because I consider it injudicious to attempt to occupy two fields of labor so distant from each other." [3] The following March she is reporting to Rosina that her schools had been more interesting each winter, this last one the most so. So, in spite of this success, the winter of 1829-1830 marked the close of her schools in the hills.

The Franklin Association of ministers, receiving word of her impending departure, went a step beyond their usual passing of "resolves" and endeavored, through Reverend Thomas Shepard, to have Miss Grant remove her school to Greenfield.[4] Thus they would gain for their region the two teachers instead of losing Miss Lyon. Miss Grant considered the proposition, as she had considered an invitation from Miss Catharine Beecher to become her associate in the Hartford school the previous summer and autumn. Miss Grant's enrolment had meanwhile risen in this winter of 1830 to one hundred and forty.

On January 27, 1830, Miss Grant writes from Ipswich to Miss Lyon.

> "I have little expectation we shall ever have a sufficient boarding establishment here. Their accommodations at

Greenfield are desirable. But French, music, and oil painting had better be excluded from our school till its character is entirely changed and it needs these appendages. Our past success calls upon us to show the world what can be done on our plan, and we must not sacrifice it for a handsome house and conveniences.

"After my last answer to Hartford I decided to labor here cheerfully, unless Providence opened a wide, plain door for my removal. They are ready to make proposals at Andover if I would hear them; but the expenses must be high there. Tell me what you know and what you think about it." [5]

Miss Beecher had started her school in Hartford in 1823, and had managed by 1827 to get money, on a stock company basis, for a building. But she was finding herself desperately overworked. In May, 1829, she wrote Miss Grant urging her to come and aid her, making her contribution especially on the moral and religious side, which she feels she is neglecting because of the pressure of the "literary and scientific and mechanical departments." Miss Grant considered the matter and declined. But when did a single refusal ever halt the plans of a Beecher? Other letters followed. Miss Beecher presented four pages of reasons for Miss Grant's joining her, which her father, Dr. Lyman Beecher, supplemented by another barrage of arguments. Miss Grant, in her methodical way, wrote out for her own guidance in making her decision, pages of reasons for and against the change, which she submitted to her friend, Reverend Joseph Emerson. He had the good sense to tell her that she must decide for herself; no outside person could advise her.[6]

This episode, with its accumulation of arguments for and against the move, has its bearing on our line of interest because it shows the limitations of the privately managed school—those limitations which were to drive Miss Lyon out within a short time to seek a public endowment for a permanent foundation. The invitation tempted Miss Grant for several reasons. The educational standards of Miss Beecher were similar to her own. They both had also the common aim of seeking to establish higher education for girls on a permanent foundation. She recognized the point which Miss Beecher stressed that her Ipswich school depended at that time for its successful

continuance on her own personality and efforts. The difference came in clientele and expense of schooling. The point is interesting because Miss Grant was insisting on moderate expenses, which Miss Lyon was to endeavor to make even more moderate in her own future plan. The ordinary expenses of a girl at Hartford Miss Grant discovered by inquiry to be from $250 to $300 (including clothing). Miss Beecher argued here, as she was to argue later with Miss Lyon, that girls with wealth had greater influence than those in less fortunate circumstances, and that the cause of education was furthered by their training. Miss Grant reasoned with herself on this wise: "Can I, with my single hand, direct the current from its deep worn channel?" And she decided that she could not. The Hartford school was bound to be more expensive and thus more exclusive than she would choose.

But by 1831, the first entire year spent by Miss Lyon at Ipswich, the problem of accommodations had become almost overwhelming. Three hundred, according to one report, applied for entrance. By raising the school age and slightly increasing the requirements, Miss Grant and Miss Lyon cut the number to one hundred and ninety; but they realized that some further provision must be made if the school was to continue.

In February, 1831, the two submitted to the trustees of Ipswich Female Academy a joint letter in which they say that before they give further encouragement to the "friends of science, literature, and religion abroad" who are suggesting their removal to some other situation, they deem it proper to tell what provision they consider essential for establishing a female seminary on a good foundation, with the prospect of making it permanent.[7]

There it stands in the letter: a suggested series of specifications for a seminary which should match in comfort as closely as possible the accommodations of the college or seminary for boys. Both the letter (too long to quote here) and the accompanying pamphlet were issued by the trustees as a money-raising document. The requisites as stated were twofold: a seminary building and a boarding-house. The main building was to be free of rent, with a hall that would seat 175 scholars, several recitation rooms, a laboratory, and a library and reading room, with the necessary apparatus and books. The boarding-house, for 150 students, was to be contiguous to the seminary building and surrounded (note the modern touch!) by a

few acres of playground. Its rooms were to be pleasant and airy, "so finished and furnished as to give ladies as favorable a situation, while pursuing their studies, as is afforded to young men at our colleges, or other seminaries."

The pamphlet stresses the need for the boarding-house. If, as Miss Grant testifies, Miss Lyon had been slow in coming into a feeling of the need of emphasizing buildings in connection with girl's education, she was thoroughly converted now. She had been wont to say to Miss Grant, with the enthusiasm of the born teacher, "Never mind the brick and mortar; let us have the living minds to work upon." [8] But she had come to see that much of the best talent of the teachers was expended wastefully in the securing and supervising of suitable homes for the girls.

In that winter of 1831, with the plans and appeal in print, half the money pledged conditionally, and three prospective trustees furthering the idea, it really seemed for a time as if this Ipswich plan might go through. But this was the winter when Miss Grant's strength failed and she was forced to leave her school for an indefinite period. It is little wonder that the combination of her departure and the lack of interest in the cause of girls' education was too much for this ambitious project. Miss Lyon would doubtless have commented in later years, from the vantage point of her experience in money raising, that the plan itself lacked those elements of appeal to a benevolent public which she came to find necessary.

XV

MISS LYON TAKES A HAND

What About Amherst for a Location? 1832-1833

So long as she was acting for and with Miss Grant, Miss Lyon lent herself to the prospect of establishing the future school at Ipswich or in that vicinity. But when that line of approach seemed blocked, her thoughts winged straight to those pupils in the hills, for whom she had earlier confessed her "strong partiality," and towards the friends of education in Franklin county and at Amherst. This was home ground. She had seen Amherst College founded there in the previous decade.

So in the winter of 1832 we find her writing to her long-time friend Professor Hitchcock of Amherst, setting forth the whole matter and asking whether he feels like sounding out sentiment in that region.

Ipswich, Mass., February 4, 1832.

Rev. and Dear Sir:

Knowing that you are interested to learn any thing about the proposed plan for a permanent female seminary, which has been agitated by some of its friends for more than a year, I make no apology for this communication.

The friends of this object, I think, are beginning to look upon it in a more extended view, and are beginning to consider it an important object, as connected with the prosperity and advancement of female education in general, and not simply as a *very good* thing to promote Miss Grant's and Miss Lyon's school, and facilitate their usefulness. These local, private, and personal views, I think should be far removed from the object. Could I be permitted to labor in the portico, and spend my days in clearing the ground for that which is destined to continue, and to exert an

extensive and salutary influence on female education, and on religion, from generation to generation, it would be the height of my ambition.

What permanent female seminaries are now in existence? What one in New England, of a high character, is necessarily, from its plan, destined to outlive its present teachers? Ought this so to be? Are not a few permanent female seminaries needed? —say one or two in a state? Could there be a few of this character, designed exclusively for older young ladies preparing to teach, and soon to go forth and exert an influence in a variety of ways on the cause of education and religion,—a place of resort, where those from different parts of the country, designing to spend their lives in doing good, might come together, together receive instruction, form and mature their plans, and exert over each other's views and feelings an extensive and powerful influence,—would not great good result? Might not such seminaries have an extensive influence in removing that false mantle of charity, which has been thrown over a great many *little* schools, and great ones, too, which have, to a great extent, had the moulding of female character, but which have not been what they should be?

"The institution is to be entirely new," Miss Lyon continues, "not having any connection with that which is the present field of our labors." Briefly she tells what has already been done, of the purpose to bring the subject before the public, of the board of prospective trustees, mostly from the immediate vicinity of Ipswich. Although it is generally understood that the location should be Ipswich, that is not necessary. For herself, she says, "feeling that a genial soil would be of vast importance in this first attempt," she is exceedingly desirous that locations on the Connecticut River be considered and thinks Amherst or Northampton have peculiar advantages. Can Professor Hitchcock test the state of feeling in his vicinity, where she feels there is a greater prospect of success than in the eastern part of the state?

"If you think it a vain thought," she continues, "a foolish and impracticable scheme, my only request is that you would commit this sheet to the flames, and bury the whole in oblivion." Her con-

cluding paragraphs show an appreciation of the magnitude of the proposition and of the need of men of high caliber to initiate it.

> Nothing can be done on a subject like this without the attention of a few benevolent individuals, whose time and talents are exceedingly precious, and whose hands are already full of other great and important concerns. None but such men could do the work. None but such could excite an interest on this hitherto neglected subject. None but such could carry it forward. None but such could give any hope of success. . . . I must now, my dear sir, beg that you will not look on this subject in the view of personal friendship, and feel under a kind of obligation to treat it with some little respect. Unless it commends itself to your judgment as one which has a high claim on our benevolence, I could not ask you to devote to it a single moment of your very precious time. But if it has such claims, I would most gladly raise my feeble voice, entreating all who would befriend such an object to lend a helping hand.[1]

In this letter Miss Lyon suggests a seminary for older young ladies preparing to teach. The emphasis at Ipswich had been chiefly on the training of girls for life in their homes and as mothers, although there had been preparation for teaching as well. Evidently Miss Lyon has come to feel that an appeal for a training school for teachers might have more chance for success. (This was seven years before the first normal school was established in Massachusetts.)

That summer of 1832 she prepared, at the suggestion of Mr. Heard, treasurer of the Ipswich school and one of the committee for the new plan, a prospectus for a "New England Female Seminary for Teachers," which was sent to friends of Ipswich Seminary.[2] The objects of the prospective school are to be fourfold; to increase the number of well-qualified teachers, supplying a deficiency recognized by all engaged in the cause of education, to induce many who were already teachers to improve themselves further, to "exert an influence in bringing as much of the labor of instruction into the hands of ladies as propriety will allow"; and to "lead the way towards the establishment of permanent female seminaries in our land."

This circular, says Professor Hitchcock in his biography, "bears strongly the impress of Miss Lyon's mind and hand."

Events seemed at first to move fast in the direction of an Amherst establishment. In November of that year (1832), Dr. Heman Humphrey,[3] President of Amherst College, wrote to Miss Lyon of the ending of the Mount Pleasant Collegiate Institute, a school for boys which had flourished there for some years, and said: "Providence has, so to speak, thrown Mount Pleasant into the market, and we should be glad to see such a seminary as yours there, if it should be thought an advantageous location."

The Mount Pleasant estate had fifteen acres of land; the buildings seemed to present an unusual opportunity, although the boarding arrangements were sufficient for only half the number then attending Ipswich Seminary. The purchase price was far too high for immediate consideration, but the owner would rent for six hundred dollars a year.

Forwarding Dr. Humphrey's letter Miss Lyon writes on November 29 to Miss Grant:

I am in favor of endeavoring to secure Mount Pleasant, because I have next to no faith that the public are now prepared to raise a sum sufficient to meet the necessities of the institution unless it is done by stepping stones, and these must be laid by the actual progress of the institution. You know this is the way everything is done in New England. Amherst College, and all the other institutions of the kind, have been founded by commencing operations, by forming a nucleus, and then calling for assistance.

Might it not be a good plan, rather than to do worse, to make an attempt at Amherst, but not with the certain expectation of permanence? Would not the fact that the school was in operation there, be of assistance in obtaining the funds, and might not the accommodations there be a stepping stone towards better? [4]

Miss Grant's reply was more favorable to the Amherst location than had been expected—possibly, we suspect from other letters of the winter, because she realized that she was losing Miss Lyon if some such plan did not eventuate.[5] The experience of carrying on the Ipswich school for the long period of Miss Grant's absence had

convinced Miss Lyon that there was no more to superintending such a school than one of them could handle alone, supported by able assistants. With deep personal regret she has decided to plan for departure within a year, though she is allowing time for readjustments at the school. (It was already understood that she was to have the coming summer of 1833 free for rest and travel.) Should the new plan go through, there might be sufficient opportunity for them to stay together. But the prospects do not seem bright. "You will ask about our great plan," she writes on December 9, 1832. "I do not think there is one chance in twenty for it to succeed."[6] And again, a month later: "It does not appear to me probable that you or I shall live to see a female seminary in New England, such as we desire, so endowed as to become permanent."[7] In that same month of January she writes again at greater length:

It seems rather discouraging, when I look over the last two years. How much time and strength I have spent in thinking, feeling, conversing, and planning on this subject, and to how little purpose! How many plans I have drawn and altered, and how many sheets written and burnt! I am not, however, disheartened. I am ready to attempt anything which seems pointed out by Providence, even without a surety of success.[8]

They were actual plans of buildings to which she refers, some of them still extant and preserved in the archives of Mount Holyoke College. One such set has an allowance of a single room for each student—a most unusual idea for those days. Miss Lyon was working out every detail of her far-reaching vision. In the midst of her times of discouragement, something new would happen, and she would shortly be writing with renewed zeal such a paragraph as the one which follows:

I have never known such an overwhelming interest in the great plan as I have for a few weeks past. It does appear to me that it is a good plan, and one which God in his own time will own and bless. I know of nothing which I should not be ready to do, nor any sacrifice which I should not be ready to make to promote the object. . . . . Every thing connected with the great plan in

which we have been interested, takes hold of my inmost soul, and at once seems to prostrate all my powers.[9]

In February she gains a new recruit from her own Conway and the Franklin Association of ministers, Reverend Daniel Crosby, "an energetic man . . . his talents much respected abroad, . . . a young man, and not worn out." He contributes the sound observation that "it needs to be taken hold of by those who have not everything else in their hands, and by those who will not be crushed by difficulties." Yet even he feels bound to add that "if all attempts shall fail now, the effort will prepare the way to raise forty or fifty thousand dollars some twenty years hence".[10]

With him she goes about the difficult business of arranging a meeting between the Ipswich group and the men from Amherst and the region roundabout, but is obliged because of the "precarious state of the journeying at this season of the year," to postpone such a conference until April. Of the gentle approach necessary to reassure these gentlemen that they may safely attend such a meeting without having thereby committed themselves to any action whatsoever, we can surmise from the draft of a letter to Mr. Crosby, written and rewritten, with sentences crossed out and others of like nature inserted in which she explains that: "the meeting is altogether of a general character . . . the object is to look at the object in general . . . it is not designed to make any direct attack on Ips. Fem. Sem. . . . no one who consents to attend the meeting incurs by it any responsibility . . . no one invoking himself to take any further steps."[11] The confusion in this draft is so unlike Miss Lyon, who was usually so clear and direct. But she realizes that she must whisper softly this plan which she is longing to shout from the housetops.

We see her working out her wise philosophy as to the place of women in the promotion of the plan. A woman, or two women, must not try to engineer it. They must guard against calling forth a fear of too much "female influence" which might be called "female greatness," and against the suspicion that the effort is for their own personal gain. To her intimate friend and associate she talks it all out on paper:

I feel more and more that the whole business must, in name, devolve on benevolent gentlemen, and not on yourself and my-

self. I do not feel so much afraid as I did that they will not take the right steps, but I feel much more afraid that they will not act at all. If the institution is ever founded, it will be safe only in the hands of God, and, under God, in the arms of the whole benevolent community, including not only the rich, but the poor. If anything at all *should* be done, the less you and I have to do with the business part of the affair, the better. Fewer needless, unkind remarks will be thrown out, less jealousy will be excited, and our private influence will be more extensive and useful in directing matters for the good of the institution.

It is desirable that the plans relating to the subject should not seem to originate with *us,* but with benevolent *gentlemen.* If the object should excite attention, there is danger that many good men will fear the effect on society of so much female influence, and what they will call female greatness. They will think and say, "Miss Grant and Miss Lyon want to do some great thing, to have a large sum of money raised, and a great institution established, and to see themselves at the head of the whole, and then they will be satisfied." I imagine I have seen a little of this already, and if more interest were to be felt in the cause, more jealousy might be excited.[12]

The desire for personal gain is not to be credited wholly to the feminine side. Ten days later (February 13, 1833) she is writing to Miss Grant:

I have written you about Amherst, and the views of Mr.—— and his friends. Their plan, at best, would make the institution a personal affair. I thought it best, on my own private responsibility, to pull down some of their castles, if possible. Their zeal did not seem to be very great, when they learned that the plan was one which would allow little or no prospect of income to the steward, to merchants, and to others engaged in the concern.[13]

By the last week in February she is questioning the Amherst idea:

I begin to doubt whether you will consider it expedient to go to Amherst on the best terms on which there is any hope that we

can go. The highest of my hopes is only that by some means, the rent can be collected by dollars and cents from the farmers and mechanics all over Franklin and Hampshire counties, in order to make an experiment of three years. The greater prospect is, that, at the close of that period, the school will be thrown on the public without a home. But I am inclined to hazard, for nothing will ever be done without it on this subject. . . .

. . . If this experiment can be made, borne on the broad shoulders of an associate body of gentlemen from different parts of the state, as their plan, I have a hope that these gentlemen would so bring the subject before the public, that it would be safe, before the close of the three years, to solicit of the community the sum of forty thousand dollars.[14]

Such is Miss Lyon's brave hope in February. Following a poorly attended meeting in March, when the board of prospective trustees dissolved, she writes on April 6th, "I think there are more than nine chances out of ten that the door of Providence will be closed against all future operations towards founding a permanent institution."[15] After another meeting in Boston, this time with very few present, she adds: "I do not think it best to make any attempt to revive the subject again. The *indications of Providence* appear to *me* plain." She is even ready, she thinks, to change her entire attitude: to disclaim all expectation of any plan for a permanent seminary in her day, to turn, with Miss Grant, to disseminating knowledge which might operate on the next generation, describing the advantages of such an institution, setting forth what the public ought to do, and what it probably will do in the next generation. For herself and Miss Grant there remains only to "collect the materials" for the "temple" which is to built by their successors.[16]

It sounds final, does it not? It would have been final with most people, but not with Mary Lyon. She was not basing this judgment on her own personal discouragement but on the "manner in which the scheme is regarded by various individuals, who, I think, are a fair index of the public." Yet within four years she was to succeed in interesting the public to the point of contributing twice the amount of money discussed in connection with this Amherst effort for

starting Mount Holyoke Seminary, across a mountain range in the not-distant village of South Hadley.

But first her own springs of strength must be given time to fill again. She closes the Ipswich school, which, we must remember, she has been carrying all these months. A week later she writes to her friend Mrs. Hannah Chickering Briggs in Dedham:

Ipswich, May 14, 1833.

I doubt not you will be glad to receive from my pen a few thoughts, though hastily written. A week ago yesterday I put your name on a list with nearly twenty others, to whom I wished to write forthwith.

To tell the truth, I have been so immersed in cares for two or three months, and my brain has been so strained to keep in mind present duties, and not to forget anything important, that it has often seemed as if things and circumstances which were not needed for present use would be not only forgotten at the time, but even obliterated from my memory. For a week past, in my chamber alone, in a straight-forward course of business, in the midst of letters, papers, &c., I have been resting at a great rate. It does seem as if I never gained so much mental rest in a week before in my life. I have had a most curious vacation in respect to calling to mind things and circumstances which I had not thought of for weeks, and which seemed to be entirely forgotten. To myself I seem almost like one coming to life.[17]

In late May she is still waiting for news of Miss Grant's arrival from the South, which will set her free. On Friday, June 28, 1833, she leaves Ipswich for a summer trip to Philadelphia and the West.

XVI

HER WESTWARD JOURNEY

Summer of 1833

The West! how vast and remote it seemed to New Englanders in the 1820's and 1830's—this West which seems to us so small because it comprises chiefly Ohio, Michigan, and Illinois, with western New York as its gateway! Yet Mary Lyon, New England schoolmistress, single lady of thirty-six years, started blithely off on an extended summer tour which began in the regions of conventional travel but went beyond them across Lake Erie to Detroit at a time when only occasional seasoned travelers joined the stream of emigrants who were journeying thither for purposes of home-making.

Mary Lyon's personal connection with the West began early when her oldest sister Electa (Mrs. Ariel Moore) went to Ohio, in which "lonely wilderness" she was left a widow with four children in 1824.[1] (Now she had moved eastward and become one of the family clan which Mary was to visit on the borders of Lake Erie.)

Another contact began in 1823 when Amanda White married William Ferry, a Granby young man who had taught at Sanderson Academy before he studied for the ministry. The year before their marriage he was sent out by the "United Foreign Missionary Society" of the Presbyterian church to explore among the Indian tribes with a view to establishing a mission among them. Steamboat travel on the Great Lakes was at this time just beginning. Young Ferry took passage on the *Superior* on the second trip of this boat, which was the first steamer to enter Lake Huron. To Mackinac, a remote outpost at the northernmost tip of Michigan's peninsula, he took his bride in 1823. Since that time the White family and Mary Lyon had been made familiar with this region by interchange of letters. The Ferry home was too remote for Mary to think of visiting it in 1833, but the impression of this unsettled region was part of her background of information concerning the West.[2]

Other contacts came through correspondence with students from

Derry and Ipswich who had gone thither as teachers and ministers' wives. Before the educational deficiencies of the West had become a "cause," with the Beechers and Governor Slade of Vermont its ardent champions, and Boston ladies were forming societies in its behalf, Miss Lyon and Miss Grant were alive to the need. In Buckland Miss Lyon talked to her students about it in her geography course, a course truly progressive at a time when even in Woodbridge's latest American atlas all distances were still measured from London. To her sister Rosina she writes from Buckland, March 9, 1830:

We have made it an object to gain enlarged and correct views, especially relating to our own country, its present state, its interesting character, its wants, its prospects, as to what needs to be done, what can be done, what ought to be done; and finally, as to what is our duty. Many intelligent, refined young ladies, who have been brought up in the lap of indulgence, thought they should be willing to go to the remotest corner of the world and teach a school among the most degraded and ignorant, might it only be said of them by their Master, as it was said of one of old, "She hath done what she could." [3]

This was the spring when the Beechers first turned their thoughts westward. Reverend Lyman Beecher, had his interest "greatly excited and increased" in what he termed the "Majestic West." Fired with a desire to save it for orthodoxy, he wrote to his daughter Catharine at her school in Hartford, Connecticut, under date of July 8, 1830:

> "The moral destiny of our nation, and all our institutions and hopes, and the world's hopes, turns on the character of the West, and the competition now is for that of preoccupancy in the education of the rising generation, in which Catholics and infidels have got the start of us. . . . If we gain the West, all is safe; if we lose it, all is lost." [4]

His particular contribution towards this end was to be the acceptance of the presidency of Lane Theological Seminary in Cincinnati, Ohio, which city he apostrophizes as the "London of the West."

But before the Beechers reached their destination and Catharine did her share for the cause by establishing a short-lived girls' school in Cincinnati, Miss Lyon was corresponding with former pupils in Oxford and Chillicothe, Ohio, about their schools, and also with Reverend Charles C. Beatty of Steubenville, Ohio,[5] concerning teachers for his educational institution: a flourishing female seminary which, according to the *American Annals of Education,* had by 1828, "one hundred pupils, a dozen regular teachers, three assistant teachers, three assistant pupils, and a matron."

Mary Lyon's tour in this summer of 1833 had no such ardent educational or missionary objective, although, as we shall see, her beloved school was often in her mind. She did not visit these friends in southern Ohio, though they had hoped she would do so. She was off for a vacation and for family visiting, with a trip to Philadelphia preceding the longer journey westward. For our knowledge of this journey we have, beside a very few letters, the precious little notebook in which she jotted down her expenses, kept a brief diary and made a few other notes.[6]

The vacation spirit was in her from the first. Even before she left Boston she took a day of her new leisure to visit the "Cambridge College, library, botanical garden and Mount Auburn." Then, as the custom was, she left Boston at about 3 A.M. on July 4 to ride by stage 80 miles to Norwich, Connecticut, there to take the steamboat for New York at 5 P.M., arriving in New York the next morning. That day, Friday, she "visited castle garden, battery—Bible house, travel depository and some other places"; on Saturday and Monday she visited the American Museum, City Hall, and several other places of interest, leaving New York for Philadelphia on Tuesday, the journal comment being "headache, unpleasant ride, arrived at Philadelphia about 3 P.M." To Miss Grant she writes more fully, showing the difficulties of travel in those days.

Philadelphia, July 10, 1833.

Yesterday I came to this place. I rose in the morning with the headache, which increased till I reached Amboy. When I took the railroad car, my seat was rather confined; the motion of the carriage increased the pain in my head, and produced an excessive nervous restlessness. It did seem as if I could not go forward; but still I must. I had no protector, no one to take care of my bag-

gage, and engage a hack after I should arrive. I felt, emphatically, that I was a stranger in a strange land.

After I reached the steamboat, I was, in some measure, relieved; but O, the noise and confusion of men and women of all descriptions; the crying of children from every quarter—on deck, in the cabin, and in every direction. But when I arrived at Philadelphia, I found a carriage without perplexity, which took me to the door of Miss E., where I find a quiet resting-place.[7]

That she did not drop the thought of the school is shown by the journal entries concerning the purchase here of apparatus, in which she expended, according to her careful expense account, $131.40 of the $408.50½ with which she had left Boston—certainly a large expenditure for science equipment. With what care she selected it and watched over its preparation we can see by diary entries: "Mon. 22—purchased appa. . . . , Tues. 23 . . . went to see appa. . . . Thurs. 25 . . . called to see appa., Sat. 27 . . . went to see appa."

She went sightseeing indefatigably, visiting among other places the Mint, a porcelain manufactory, a House of Refuge (for girls), the Old State House, Independence Hall, the Navy Yard (to see the "wonderful ship," the *Pennsylvania,* of which she says that it "truly exceeded" all her ideas of its magnitude), the Marine Hospital, where the ventilating system greatly interested her, and the Academy of Natural Science. What sightseer, reading of the number of steps which she climbed, does not sympathize with her comment: "I closed the week greatly interested during the last three days, in fine health, except some little suffering in the muscles and sinews?"

The return to New York was by another route.

July

29—Left Phil. at 7 o'clock—steamboat to Bristol, N.J., in stage 12 miles to Trenton, 10 to Princeton.

30—Rode in stage 16 miles to Brunswick—steamboat to New York—fine view of New York Bay.

August first had educational purposes as she visited Newark Female Institute, of which a Mr. Worcester was principal.

The next day, August second, she started from New York City

on her western tour, spending the first night at West Point, and then taking a five-hour trip by steamboat up the Hudson river to Catskill, whence she drove twelve miles to the mountain house above the village. A letter to Miss Grant written here, and later ones from Niagara and Buffalo were happily deemed by her biographers worthy of inclusion in the memoirs. (The comment by Mrs. Cowles, who edited them, is that these extracts are given "simply to show her interest in natural objects." They are of a descriptive type familiar to readers of published travel diaries of this period.)

Catskill Mountain, August 8, 1833.

. . . I remember that, for my own sake, you are more desirous I should dwell on what I see and hear than on the seminary at home, in which my heart is so much interested, but about which I have not indulged one moment's anxiety since I left you. I see enough to make my letters interesting; but these fragments of time, so few and so short, are worth but little in trying to recall and describe what I have seen and heard. And even if I had sufficient time, I have so little tact, that it seems to me my letters, of all things, must be the most insipid.

I am now twenty-two hundred feet above the Hudson, on one of the peaks of the Catskill Mountains, termed Pine Orchard, snugly settled in a pleasant chamber in the "Mountain House."

The Catskill is indeed a delightful chain of mountains. I have been favored with fine prospects of it at various points. This afternoon, we have taken a drive to see one of the mighty wonders of nature. As from different situations we behold the broad sides, the various summits, and numerous peaks of the mountain, the whole seems like a vast ocean of luxuriant green; at one time waving gently with the undulating breeze; at another, rolled and tossed by the mighty tempest into lofty billows and deep gulfs. . . . Pine Orchard . . . furnishes a most extensive prospect. The "Mountain House" stands near the brink of a precipice, with a bold, commanding front. It is indeed a delightful spot.

The nearer scenery is composed of the neighboring peaks of the same grand chain. On the one hand, they rise with a familiar

nearness; on the other, they recede to a more respectful distance. On one side, we behold neighboring summits, rising high above our heads; on another, we cast our eye downwards on the waving tops of the thick trees, with their rolling surface; while in a third direction, rival mountains seem to unite, tipped with the blue summits of more distant and higher peaks.

The more distant scenery embraces the rich and extensive valley of the Hudson. The view is said to extend about one hundred miles in length and fifty in breadth. But I will not attempt to tell you of the finely-cultivated fields, enclosed by neat, regular fences; nor of the towns, villages, scattered over the whole prospect; nor of the beautiful groves, whose rich foliage at this season finely contrasts with the sterile appearance of the neighboring fields, just disrobed by the hand of the reaper; nor of the long and winding course of the Hudson, whitened with sails, ornamented with islands, and lined with villages, trees, and wooded embankments.

I noticed the first impression on my fellow-passengers, as we ascended a very long flight of steps into an elevated piazza, fronting the valley of the Hudson. Scarcely looking after their baggage, almost all, with one consent, stopped to admire and wonder. In the spacious drawing-room within, the numerous visitors seemed full of glee; but without in the piazza and on the broad, flat, projecting rocks around the house, the low voice and sweet stillness reminded me of a company in a gallery of paintings.[8]

The itinerary of the next three and half weeks is tantalizing. "Called on Mrs. Willard," she enters in her record of her overnight stay at Troy. What would we not give to know more of the exchange of experiences of these two educators who had not met since Mary Lyon made that stay with Professor Eaton nine years before? Even the schedule of travel is so matter-of-fact that we must take a contemporary map and trace out the roads across long stretches of country to realize what these twenty-two-mile and fifty-mile and all-night journeys meant. But here they are, as we detach them from the diary to show the distances covered in relation to their dates.

August
9—rode in stage to Troy—took the R.R. from Schenectady 15 miles, at 9 canalboat for Utica.
10—arrived at Utica about 3.
14—rode over to Clinton, 7 miles.
19—visited Trenton Falls, took canalboat at 5.
20—rode 25 miles from Syracuse to Auburn.
22—rode 22 miles to Geneva.
23—rode 16 miles to Canandaigua . . . rode during the night 30 miles to Rochester.
26—visited Genesee Falls.
27—rode 35 miles to Gaines.
28—rode nearly 50 miles to Lewiston.
29—rode 9 miles to Niagara Falls.
30—rode 22 miles to Buffalo.
31—rode 4 miles to Seneca.
September
2—rode in waggon to Buffalo.

We must turn to the journals of other travelers for any description of traveling conditions. The journeying by canal was easiest. (Mary Lyon did more of that on her return trip.) Mrs. Anne Royall, who went west by this route in 1827-1828, two years after the opening of the Erie Canal, tells of the comfort of the packet-boats.[9] Each accommodated about thirty passengers, with dining rooms, separate quarters for ladies and gentlemen, and rooms lined with berths, as was the custom in all steamboats of that day. The fare, including board, was four cents a mile; without board, three cents. An English traveler who took approximately the same journey as Mary Lyon, being en route for the Presbyterian Synod in Detroit, tells how the canal passed through some very flourishing towns, but speaks also of the "dismal monotony of woods, that for the most part, skit either side." The roads he describes as "pretty good," with exception of a corduroy patch now and then, "which gave us a hearty shaking." [10]

It was over these roads that Miss Lyon did most of her journeying. She had no intention of sitting on the deck of a canalboat and being towed the three hundred and sixty miles from Albany to Buffalo. She must make a zigzag trip across the State, visiting friends, attending school or seminary exercises, bumping over the roads by day or night,

with an occasional diary entry "not well" or "took medicine in morning" to show that even her health equilibrium was sometimes upset by the strenuous program.

The all-too-brief diary does furnish some information beyond the travel schedule. On August 14, when she rode over to Clinton from Utica, it was to "attend Commencement," doubltess at Hamilton College, which had been founded in 1812. In Clinton she observed one of the "manual-labor" schools for girls in which the expenses were reduced by the carrying on by the students of household and even of money-making tasks. It has always been understood that she patterned the domestic work plan which she introduced at Mount Holyoke Seminary on the system which she saw in successful operation in some of these New York schools. In reality her fundamental idea was entirely different, though the observation of such schools doubtless contributed to her information. In this region plans were being made in these particular years for the founding of Knox College, which did begin with such a system for girls. As Miss Lyon talked during this trip with men and women who were alive to the country's educational needs and making plans to solve them, the founding of a new school must have come to seem a more possible undertaking than it had when she left New England.[11]

Two days later she reports herself as calling at another school. On the seventeenth she "met the teachers of Utica." At Auburn she "attended ceremonies connected with Theolog. Sem." at their "Anniversary," going also to the Education Society meeting in the evening. For almost every day, the entry reads that she called on this person or that, chronicling an unending series of visits. Were they former pupils whom she knew in these places, or friends of friends, or church or American Board connections? The initials leave us uninformed. At Geneva she walked "around the village" (then as now the site of Hobart College). The next day she rode 16 miles to Canandaigua, made calls there, and then rode during the night 30 miles to Rochester. That was a hard trip, for the only accommodations such a stagecoach had were three long inside seats, one at each end and one in the middle, on which three persons could be seated. In Rochester she went to the home of the first of the family with whom she came in touch, Rev. and Mrs. Lyon. There one day, as they drove to Genesee Falls, they had, according to her journal, "much conversation on female education." But although that comment occurs but once, we suspect that

this was the subject talked over in most of these calls. Miss Lyon was gathering new information as well as a fresh store of energy for her next move.

Then, after two more days of journeying, she came to Niagara Falls, where to her relief she had an entirely satisfying experience. One gains from her story an insight into her thorough methods of observation and her insistence on an individual and sincere personal reaction. She describes her two days. On the first she visited the Falls on the American side, and went back again to see them by moonlight; on the second she revisited them and passed over to view them from the Canadian side. One paragraph is especially interesting.

I have heard so many things said by one and another who visited the Falls; one saying, "You will be disappointed;" another, "You will not be disappointed if you stay long enough;" a third, "I do not think it exceeds this object or that;" . . . I feared that I should be unable to feel the soul-moving power, and I had an ardent desire that I might not acknowledge, even to myself, any second-hand emotions, any influence which did not affect my own heart. But I have been to see for myself, and I am glad I have been. I want to go again; I shall love to dwell on the most distant remembrance.[12]

From Buffalo she took a lake journey of four and a half hours to Dunkirk, the port for Chautauque County, described by one of the gazetteers as the "southernmost and westernmost county of the State," and rode three miles to Fredonia where she was received into the heart of her family. Happily we can have her tell for herself of her visit there. She is reporting to Miss Grant.

Fredonia, September 4.

My time here will be very much occupied. I did not really think how much visiting I should have to do here. I design to visit all my near relatives twice; once before I go to Detroit, and once on my return. I have in this village only my eldest sister * and her family; but I found my sister F. [Freelove] here, from

* Electa, Mrs. Moore, who went there from Ohio after her husband's death.

Massachusetts, waiting my arrival. In Stockton, a few miles distant, is my only brother, and his great family*; sister Rosina's husband and four children; near by the only brother of my mother, and his children married and settled around him. Then there are relatives of my relatives, and others from Massachusetts, whom I used to know more than twenty years ago, who will expect me to look in upon them. . . .[13]

And again, on September 10:

Since I last wrote to you, my time has been most fully occupied in forming new acquaintances with those I wish to know, and whom I should like to have familiarly acquainted with me. I mean the individuals who compose the three branches of our own immediate family circle. I have been able to accomplish much. I never despatched business faster. I feel considerably acquainted with every one. It has been rather fatiguing, because everything is adapted so to call forth the powers of the heart. There are so many little circumstances suited to bring before me, in a most vivid manner, the numerous changes which have taken place in our family during the last fourteen years, since my brother came into this country. Till that time, my home was with him. Though he is considerably altered, and appears somewhat bowed down with trials, sickness, and age, yet I find him the same kind-hearted, generous affectionate brother.[14]

Then began that ten-day trip to Detroit and back which rouses our curiosity as to its purpose and our especial interest because here Mary Lyon was leaving behind the conventional travel routes and setting forth on a real adventure. In 50-mile rides she skirted the southern shore of Lake Erie, with overnight stops near Erie, Pennsylvania, and at a public house a few miles beyond Ashtabula, and an over-Sunday stay with Mr. and Mrs. Chapin in Madison, Ohio, visiting on Monday "Mrs. Chapin's school," before she took the boat for Detroit. The act of embarking on this boat may have been somewhat of an adventure, for accounts of lake travel of these years say that there were few if any

* Aaron Lyon had ten children.

harbors on Lake Erie where a landing could be made from a steamer except by means of a small boat, and this only when wind and weather would permit. The one letter, from which—alas!—we have only an extract, comments on lake travel thus, discussing her return.

One says to me, "Do not, on any account, take the Ohio, which leaves on Monday. I would not have a friend of mine go in her, for she is always meeting with accidents. On one voyage she caught fire three times; but the New York, which goes on Tuesday, is a good boat." Another says, "The New York is very easy to capsize, but the Superior, leaving the same day, is a large safe boat." Another says, "I should not feel so safe on board the Superior, for she is a very old boat. Besides, it will be just about the time for the equinoctial storm." [15]

Going to Detroit she must have gotten into the full swing of emigrant travel, as hundreds were arriving there each week on their way to set up homes farther west. The town itself had at that time, according to a gazetteer, 477 dwellings and 64 stores and warehouses. Four windmills with immense arms covered by sail-cloth turning in the wind were the first sight to greet travelers as they steamed slowly up the river. They were the forerunners of the flour mills which were to become a chief industry. Detroit was a military post, with a "narrow, bustling street" next the wharves, and beyond it spacious Jefferson Avenue with its new and stately residences.

From other sources we must get our information concerning the state of girls' education in Detroit at this time. Emily Mason, whose brother was at this time the young acting governor of Michigan Territory, says that on her own arrival there in 1831 "schools were as rare as were churches." She adds, however, that she found Detroit a charming residence. "That French element, which still remains, gave a refinement, gaiety and simplicity which few western towns could boast." [16] But schools were beginning. In 1832 the Misses Farrand opened a girls' school. This visit by Miss Lyon was in September, 1833, and in 1834 a ladies' seminary was started in a yellow brick building, three stories high with eighteen rooms, erected by a board of trustees, with William Kirkland and his wife in charge. "They professed," says one account,[17] "to impart a complete English education, with extra lessons

in French and music, all branches to be taught on the inductive method." Of this Detroit Female Seminary, Blois' Gazetteer of 1838 [18] says: "The course of instruction embraces the several useful and ornamental branches of a finished education," with the additional information that the ground had been given by public authorities of the city, and the building erected "by individual liberality" at a cost of about $8000.

With such an enterprise under way it is not a great stretch of imagination to surmise that Miss Lyon's visit was concerned with it and that her talks with the gentlemen who called upon her and took her about the city were on the subject of girls' education. One did not take so long and difficult a trip for a stay of two days and a half without some business reason. The diary record gives, however, no information save the bare facts.

Tues. 17. Rode all day in steam boat.

Wed. 18. Arrived at about 9 in the morning—stopped at Mrs. Devaun's—Received a call from Gen. Somer—from Col. Jones.

Thurs. 19. Received a call from Gen. Somer & Mr. Hastings—& from Mr. Bates—called into Miss Tappan's school.

Fri. 20. Received a call from Mr. Hastings—Mr. Somer—Col. Jones —Rode around Detroit with Mr. Somer—went on board steam ship Geo. Washington about 4.

We are taking a liberty unjustified on strict historical grounds when we insert at this point an undated fragment of a letter, known as belonging in this period prior to September, 1834, which may refer to this visit. The fragment is stated to be from a letter to Miss Grant; the earlier quotation concerning which steamer she shall take is from a letter written to Miss Grant from Detroit. Is this a portion of the same letter? It reads as follows:

They are talking about erecting a building for a female school in this city; but they have no idea of doing it, except by shares, with the expectation of an income. They look at schools, generally, just as they would at mercantile business. Some persons, who knew I was coming here, hoped that I would render some assistance about a plan; but they need *something more than a plan.*[19]

Whether this particular letter belongs to this date or not, we suspect it presents one reason why Miss Lyon did not enter into this educational project. The description of the curriculum of the school as it was started the following year indicates, too, that this was not to be her kind of school.

All that we *know,* however, of Miss Lyon's reaction to the idea of going West comes in a letter to Andover gentlemen, when they were inquiring whether she might locate her prospective school there. On July 5, 1834, she writes:

> The question of the expediency of my devoting myself to this object in some place farther west has been several times mentioned to me. That influence needs to be put forth in the more western states, as in New England, cannot be doubted. The opinion, which has so universally prevailed here, that female seminaries of the first respectability must necessarily be expensive, has overspread the whole State of New York, and marched on farther still, keeping pace with every effort in behalf of female education. As I believe, with many others, that this opinion is an error, and a highly injurious one, this is the point on which my mind centers more than on any other, and on which I wish to use an influence as far as I can.
>
> Considering the vast importance of the more western portion of our country, and the more abundant zeal, and the greater rapidity with which they can carry any thing forward, when they are once convinced of its importance, I have been half inclined, at times, to look upon some spot beyond the limits of New England as more desirable for experiments on this subject. But, considering that improvements in education seldom make any progress eastward, my purpose to live and labor in New England has, during the last six months, become fixed and unchanging.[20]

But that was long after her return, when she had had interesting contacts by correspondence with educational opportunities in Ohio. Now she must board the *George Washington,* "the most splendid boat on Lake Erie—length 186 feet," with which she is so impressed that she copies into the back of her journal a full description

of it, taken from the advertisement. She leaves Detroit at four o'clock on the afternoon of the 20th and lands at Dunkirk on the 22nd, with "lake rough" her record for the 21st. Another fortnight with her family, longer than she intended because of the serious illness of her sister Freelove who was visiting there, is ended by a trip by stage to Rochester, where she arrives on the evening of October 9th and takes the boat on the canal, homeward bound.

Perhaps it was on this canal journey, as her boat passed slowly through the many locks, that she reckoned up her accounts from that $408.50½ with which she started (from which nearly a third was subtracted for "apparatus" in Philadelphia) and was forced to record at the end "six cents not accounted for."

XVII

MARY LYON'S OWN SOLUTION

1834

For ten years, beginning with the spring when she went eagerly to join Miss Grant at Adams Academy, Miss Lyon had devoted herself to the higher education of girls as it was being developed according to the social pattern of the time, that is, in privately owned seminaries. The Ipswich school, to which she had given herself so freely, ranked with Miss Beecher's in Hartford and Mrs. Willard's in Troy in high educational standards. Miss Grant had achieved a remarkable reputation in this new field. Visitors from abroad, coming to study American educational methods, went out of the way to meet her and study her school; and in all her work Mary Lyon had a share.

The correspondence shows that Miss Lyon had many opportunities to carry on her own teaching under other auspices. A note from Miss Beecher in 1829 is doubtless indicative of many, and is also delightfully characteristic in its urgency. She had heard that they were trying to get Miss Lyon at Greenfield.

> "I had always supposed," writes Miss Beecher, "that it would be ungenerous in me to attempt to get you away from Miss Grant, but if circumstances are such that there is a probability that you may leave her, I wish before you make any decided engagement you would first let me *make you an offer here*. . . .
>
> "Will you write me *immediately* if there is *any* prospect that I could induce you to join the *faculty* of the H. F. Seminary?" [1]

Had she accepted any of the offers that came to her, or had she set up a private seminary of her own, Miss Lyon would doubtless have made a record as a distinguished teacher in the new field of "female education." But it is doubtful whether we of a hundred years later

would be tracing out her career, except as an interesting piece of social history. She was to make a larger contribution to education. Towards that end she started out independently and alone in 1834.

The Amherst attempt of 1832-1833 had cleared her mind. She had appraised the various lines of approach and was ready to move out on those which she believed to have the best appeal for her public. Happily they embodied her own deepest convictions.

Experience had taught her the weakness of private management. By this time she had seen Miss Beecher break down under the strain and resign her school (in 1830) into other hands while she went West with her father. Miss Grant had been forced to be absent for long periods on account of her health. But there was more involved than nervous and physical strain. There was the lack of permanence. Writing to Miss Grant in 1833 Miss Lyon had taken up this point, treating Ipswich Seminary impersonally as if they were discussing together the school of a third person.

A few words about the importance of the prosperity of Miss Grant's school. I consider it more important that it should continue to flourish during her life, or during her ability to labor, than any other school in the land which is the property of a private individual. But, after all, it is short-lived. I view it as just like Mr. Emerson's school. It was very important that Mr. Emerson should prosper during his days of labor, and that he should have a place where he might put forth his strength to peculiar advantage. But where is his school now? If we ask "Where are his labors?" I would say, "All over the earth, and their record is on high." [2]

But no permanent system of female education could be built on so personal a basis. The stock company method, then so prevalent, had obvious defects. It cast on all private schools the suspicion of being run with too much of an eye to the profits. Mary Lyon's greater concern was, however, over the inevitable cost to the student, even when the effort was made, as at Ipswich, to keep the charges as low as possible. Here she was grappling with a major educational problem, one which has not disappeared with the years. This was what finally drove her out on her crusade.

"During the past year," she writes to Hannah White, February 26, 1834, "my heart has so yearned over the adult female youth in the common walks of life, that it has sometimes seemed as if there were a fire, shut up in my bones. It does seem to me that more ought to be done, and that something more can be done. I should esteem it a greater privilege to labor in this field than in any other on which I have ever fastened my attention." [3]

She has become convinced by the two failures, first of the original Ipswich money-raising effort and then of her own Amherst plan, that gifts amounting to a sufficient sum for a public, non-profit endowment are not likely to become available for a school which is to be run on the usual lines. The public will not endow an educational institution for the higher education of the daughters of the well-to-do and wealthy families of the community.

The solution to this part of the problem she finds in a more democratic proposal. Her precedent is in the beginnings of Amherst College, with which she had been familiar. While the Mount Pleasant plan was still hanging in the balance, back in the winter of 1833, she was making her suggestion to Miss Grant.

One point more. The funds for Amherst College have been collected, not from the rich, but from liberal Christians in common life. At the commencement of that enterprise, the prospect was held out that it would be a college of high standing, where the expenses would be low, and that it would be accessible to all. This was like a mainspring, without which it is doubtful whether it would have been possible to raise the funds.

I am inclined to think that something of this kind may be indispensable to our success. The great and honorable among the good will not listen to our cause; but perhaps the more humble in life, led forward by their own ministers, may befriend this important but forsaken object. If so, if there is any class of Christians that we should seek to gratify, it must surely be the benefactors, whether high or low. If the same class of Christians who support our missionaries should contribute principally to the raising of the funds, is it not important that the style of the whole establishment should professedly be plain, though very neat? If

it were *really* plain, would it not be more respectable to have it professedly so? [4]

Miss Lyon was familiar with the success of the American Board in raising funds for its new missions. The idea grew on her that a like enthusiasm might be inspired among givers in all walks of life for the cause of freer educational opportunities for girls. "The great and honorable among the good" were not paying much attention to the cause. What about adapting the plan so that it would make an appeal to the more humble?

With these thoughts in her mind she sends out in the winter of 1834 a printed circular letter, addressed with Miss Grant's approval, "To the Friends and Patrons of the Ipswich Female Seminary." [5] It begins as follows:

It has long been a subject of deep regret to individuals, familiarly acquainted with the character and influence of this institution, that many promising young ladies, for want of pecuniary means should be denied its privileges. . . . Could the expenses be reduced one third, or one half, a great number, who now almost despair of ever being able to realize the object of their ardent desires, would be made to rejoice in the possession of opportunities for instruction and improvement which they would value more than silver or gold. . . . To effect such an object, would not a separate and independent institution, similar in character to Ipswich Seminary, be founded and sustained by the Chrsitian public?"

Towards this end she offers a six-point plan which we summarize:

1. Buildings for the school and boarders to be furnished by voluntary contributions, and placed, free from encumbrance, in the hands of trustees.
2. Teachers to be secured possessing so much of the missionary spirit that they would labor for a moderate salary compared with what they could command in other situations.
3. Style of living to be very plain and simple.
4. Domestic work of the family to be performed by members of the school.

5. Board and tuition to be placed at cost, or as low as may be, and still cover the common expenses of the family, instruction, etc.
6. The whole plan to be conducted on the principles of our missionary operations; no surplus income to go to the teachers, to the domestic superintendent, or to any other person, but all to be cast into the treasury, for the still further reduction of the expenses of the ensuing year.

On such a plan she thinks it safe to calculate upon a reduction of one third, and perhaps one half, from the expense of board and tuition at Ipswich. Such a reduction would not, as she recognized, meet the wants of the more needy and dependent.

The design would be to benefit a large and interesting portion of the industrious and enterprising, who are able to do something for their daughters, and who would be induced to make far greater efforts in behalf of their education than they do now, could they secure to them equal advantages to those of our best and most respectable female seminaries at so moderate an expense. If the standard of female education among this class could by any means be raised, and its influence more extensively diffused, every department of society must sooner or later experience the beneficial results.[5]

At the outset, in this first move of her money-raising campaign, Miss Lyon makes the bold insistence that there be no local favors granted. This is to be "a public enterprise, for the public benefit, claiming equally the patronage of every part of New England. To effect this, and to secure public confidence, no special favors should be granted to the town where the institution is established." To stress this point and make it more specific she adds: "For example, none should be received into the school unless they enter the establishment as boarders, subject to all its regulations, in the same manner as those from abroad." Miss Lyon was through with special favors, and with the Ipswich struggle to superintend girls scattered in village homes. Of the location she says, with the forward look which we come to recognize as prophetic: "The spot selected should be adapted to nourish the tender plant, and to support the lofty oak."

We are fortunate in possessing along with this circular one of the personal letters which went out with it—the one which, perhaps above all others, we should choose to have, to her friend and business adviser, Squire Thomas White of Ashfield. Wise already in the art of making her approach personal, she sets forth for him two lines of special appeal, the first to the farmer, the second, the general missionary aim.

I do wish our farmers would look at this, and see what can be done. If they would take hold of it vigorously, I do think something could be done, perhaps something which would secure the interests of thousands of their posterity. While it is desirable that every benevolent man should be able to grasp all the benevolent objects of the day, and do something for all, I doubt not but the best interests of the whole are promoted by having one mind directed to one object, and another to another. I have been thinking that if this object should be brought up, and viewed in its true light, some of our fathers in the cause of benevolence might select it as the child of their prayers and of their charities. Who would be more likely to begin upon it than our wealthy farmers? [6]

On the line of appeal with which she was so familiar in the American Board and its home missionary counterparts, she continues:

And now, my dear sir, in your old age, would you not be glad, with a few other kindred souls, to be the means of commencing a great work, which, in importance to the welfare of our country, of the church, and of the world, shall not fall behind the home missionary, or any other of our leading benevolent societies? Would you not gladly see such a work begun, and advancing? And how would your heart rejoice, if, before, you sleep in the dust, you could see it rise and spread as our foreign missionary operations have done? This, I believe, may be accomplished, and he who, first putting his hands to the work, shall say to others, "Come, and do likewise," will deserve a place with Mills, with Robert Raikes, and others of like eminence. I do long to have some one or more gentlemen look at this object, till they are ready

to do something for it. I would gladly do as much of the work as I can, and I find other ladies ready to join in it.

I have long had a secret hope that the time would arrive, when I could consistently give up my present sphere of labor, and in some way devote my life, my strength, and all my powers to this object. That time has now arrived; and, after laboring half a year longer for this seminary, I expect to close my connection with it.[6]

There, and in the following letter to her mother, written two months later, we have the inner story of Mary Lyon's mind and heart. She had given herself whole-heartedly to the school headed by Miss Grant which was advanced in curriculum but conducted after the social pattern of the typical seminary and limited in its field of service. She had carried it on loyally and successfully on these lines during Miss Grant's long absence. But all the time this secret hope of the larger project had been growing. The depth of her personal feeling is shown even at the beginning of this letter in the salutation, one more affectionate than was common in her reserved expression.

Ipswich, May 12, 1834.

My very dear Mother:

I do not expect to continue my connection with Miss G. after this summer. I have for a great while been thinking about those young ladies who find it necessary to make such an effort for their education as I made, when I was obtaining mine. In one respect, from year to year, I have not felt quite satisfied with my present field of labor. I have desired to be in a school, the expenses of which would be so small, that many who are now discouraged from endeavoring to enjoy the privileges of this, might be favored with those which are similar at less expense.

The course of instruction adopted in this institution, and the course which I have endeavored to adopt when I have instructed among my native hills, I believe is eminently suited to make good mothers as well as teachers. I have had the pleasure of seeing many, who have enjoyed these privileges, occupying the place of mothers. I have noticed with peculiar interest the cultivated and

good common sense, the correct reasoning, the industry and perseverance, the patience, meekness, and gentleness of many of them. I have felt, that if all our common farmers, men of plain, good common sense, could go through the country and witness these mothers in their own families, and compare them with others in similar circumstances, they would no longer consider the money expended on these mothers as thrown away.

Since I have lived to see so many of these ladies in their own families, I have felt more than ever before, that my field of labor was among the most desirable. I have felt that I could thank Him who has given me my work to do. O how immensely important is this work of preparing the daughters of the land to be good mothers! If they are prepared for this situation, they will have the most important preparation which they can have for any other; they can soon and easily become good teachers, and they will become, at all events, good members of society. The false delicacy, which some young ladies indulge, will vanish away as they see most of the companions of their childhood and youth occupying the solemn and responsible situation of mothers. It will no longer appear like a subject for which no care should be taken in the training of daughters.

While, in the good providence of God, I have been permitted to occupy a field of labor where I could aid in preparing some who must mould the character of future generations for their great work, I have not been quite satisfied. I have looked out from my quiet scene of labor on the wide world, and my heart has longed to see many enjoying these privileges, who cannot for the want of means. I have longed to be permitted to labor where the expenses would be less than they are here, so that more of our daughters could reap the fruits. Sometimes my heart has burned within me; and again I have bid it be quiet. I have sometimes speculated, and built airy castles, and again I have bid my mind dwell on sober realities. I have thought that there might be a plan devised by which something could be done. I have further thought, that if I could be released from all engagements and all encumbrances, perhaps I might in time find some way opened

before me for promoting this good object. With this view, I decided some time since, if Miss Grant's health should be sufficiently restored, to propose a separation. That time has now come, and we have agreed to close our joint labors next fall. Miss Grant is to be absent through the summer term, to improve her strength, and we shall spend most of the vacation here together, in getting ready for the winter, and then I expect to leave this scene of labor forever.

I do not expect immediately to commence in any other field. I very much want six months or a year to read, write, plan, and do a thousand other things. I do not expect to be idle. This may seem like a wild scheme; but I cannot plead that it is a hasty one. I have had it under careful consideration two years or more, and for one whole year the question has been weighed by Miss Grant and myself.

I hope and trust that this is of the Lord, and that He will prosper it. In this movement, I have thought much more constantly, and have felt much more deeply, about doing that which shall be for the honor of Christ, and for the good of world, than I ever did in any step in my life. I want that you should pray for me, my dear mother, that I may in this thing be guided by wisdom from above, and that the Lord would bless me, and make me a blessing. My daily prayer to God is, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? If the Lord go not with me, let me not go up hence.

Perhaps you may inquire, what course I expect to take, and where is to be my future scene of labor. This I do not know. The present path of duty is plain. The future I can leave with Him who doeth all things well.[7]

Two months later she writes, evidently in some haste, another intimate letter, this time to Mrs. Hitchcock. As she told her mother, she feels the need of six months or a year "to read, write, plan, and do a thousand other things" in preparation for the new undertaking. Now she expresses the hope that she may spend that time with the Hitchcocks in Amherst, a hope which was fulfilled. We are glad for her that she can embark on this uncharted course from their "quiet and sweet abode."

Ipswich, July 7, 1834.

My dear Mrs. Hitchcock:

As you are so much interested in my personal concerns, I have often thought of writing to you about *myself*. For a long time I have been anxiously desiring to do something more than I have yet done in behalf of those, who cannot so easily enjoy the means of instruction as those can, who generally attend this seminary. But whether any way will be devised, by which I could enjoy this privilege, I have doubted. Besides, my field of labor as connected with institution (*sic*) has been so clearly worked out, that I could not rationally anticipate any other field. But as Providence has smiled more & more on Miss Grant's health, my heart has often said to myself, it may be, that I shall yet enjoy the privilege of laboring in behalf of a cause, for which rather than any other, I would fain spend the remainder of my life, & of my strength.

Finally it became a proper question of serious consideration, whether I might not, & ought not to seek to change my field of labor. Two definite questions presented themselves. 1. How can I leave this beloved institution in a manner most suited to promote its prosperity. 2. How can I find & occupy another field.

It appeared to me plain that in the first place, the first question should be considered, & finally settled. Though it would be much more pleasant to have in view a definite field of labor as a reason for leaving this most delightful sphere of usefulness, & though it would be much more according to custom, yet I felt that it would be much more for the good of this institution, first to come to a full decision to leave this place, & fin (*sic*) the time, & then I should be at full liberty to consider the second question, & act upon it, freely in any way marked out by divine Providence. I was most desirous to avoid being such a dead weight on this dear seminary, as I should be in danger of becoming by holding a doubtful connexion for two or three years, my time & interests, half divided between this & another object. I have therefore closed my connexion with this institution, & my labors are to cease with this term.

What I shall do in future I know not. It is safe and delight-

ful to commit every thing to God. The first six months after closing my labors here, I wish to spend as a boarder in the family of some friend, where I can quietly & without interruption spend my time in reading, studying & accomplishing various kinds of business, which I have on hand. Should no field be open for my direct labors for two or three years, I should have an abundance of business, but I make no definite calculation for more than six months. In looking over my circle of friends, my mind for a few weeks has often dwelt on you & your family; & I have come to the conclusion to ask you two questions, begging of you frankly to answer in the negative, if you cannot reply in the affirmative. Have you a chamber in your house that you could spare for my use next winter? If so, would it be convenient for you to add myself to your family? If so, it will give me great pleasure to spend the next winter with you.

After tearing my heart away from this dear & delightful sphere of labors, which for so many years has been my home—the home where all my desires have centred, & all my greatest efforts have found an adequate object, it would be a great gratification, & a soothing comfort to find a quiet & sweet abode with those whom I have long regarded as dear friends. As I shall be so much of a wanderer, for sometime to come, access to a good library, wherever I may be, will be an important consideration. I should be glad too to spend the winter in a place, which is somewhat accessible, as I shall be more in the way occasionally of meeting one, may give advice with regard to the object in which I am so much interested. These & other reasons you will at once see, renders your home a very desirable home for me next winter, but I would by no means have you incommode yourself & yours to accomodate me.

Owing to definite circumstances, I should be glad to hear from you as soon as convenient. Thus you see that I have filled my sheet about *myself*. Give my kind regards to your husband, & much love to your little ones. May you have wisdom & grace to train up your children for the Lord, & may you live to see them a rich blessing to this wicked, fallen world for which so

much is yet to be done, & for which so many laborers of every description are greatly needed,

Yours with much affection,
Mary Lyon [8]

To her youngest sister, Freelove, she writes on August 26, 1834, a long letter from which we quote two paragraphs.

I took this sheet to state a few things about myself; but inadvertently I have turned aside, until it is almost full. You already know that I expect to close my labors here, and my connection with Miss Grant on earth, this fall. I am about to embark in a frail boat on a boisterous sea. I know not whither I shall be driven, nor how I shall be tossed, nor to what port I shall aim. I know not what is before me, nor where will be my next field of labor. I know not when I shall find myself engaged in regular labor in the great work of teaching, for which Providence has fitted me more than for any thing else. But I am not anxious. I have decided to close my labors here, because I felt it to be probable that I could do more good in another field. And now, after breaking asunder a thousand cords, to separate myself from this beloved institution, I feel that I must at present keep myself disengaged from any school, because, by so doing, I have more hope that the way will be open for me yet to engage in the specific field on which my heart is so deeply interested. I never had a prospect of engaging in any labor which seemed so directly the work of the Lord as this. It is very sweet, in the midst of darkness and doubt, to commit the whole to his guidance.

The next winter I want to spend partly in study, and partly in laying out plans for the future, writing &c. I wish to be in a family where I shall meet friends, and where I shall have access to a good library, and in a town where I shall not be out of the way of society, for I shall often want counsel. Providence has very kindly given me such a home at Amherst, in the family of Professor Hitchcock.[9]

XVIII

LETTERS BY THE WAY

1825-1835

Very little of Mary Lyon's casual correspondence has survived a hundred years. Yet there are letters or extracts from letters, kept for one reason or another, which present pleasant pictures.

She loved to feel that her mother was praying for her, and kept in touch all the years by appeals for such prayers which served also to give her mother an intimate knowledge of that portion of her daughter's busy life which would interest her. From Londonderry, during the early days of her teaching and in the first long period when she was away from her familiar surroundings, she writes to her mother, September 25, 1825.

. . . I have thought much more of you than usual, for a week or two past. Although my situation is necessarily rather different from what it was in childhood, yet you will not suppose that on this account I love my friends less. I sincerely desire that I may ever be saved from neglecting my early friends, especially my mother, to whom I am more indebted than to all others, except my Maker. When I think of my mother, I think of one who ardently and unceasingly desires my temporal and spiritual welfare; one to whom I owe much that I can never repay; one who never forgets me, and never forgets that I have an immortal soul; one the benefit of whose prayers I have long enjoyed, and whose desires, I trust, are now every day ascending to the throne of mercy in my behalf.[1]

From Ipswich, May 13, 1834, she writes:

. . . My dear mother, I want you to pray for the family with which I reside. . . . Another, for whom I feel great solicitude, is

a woman who works in the kitchen. She is about forty years old, and cannot read. She is now absent on a visit. I commenced teaching her to read before she went away, and design to continue it when she returns, or engage some one of the teachers to do it. She has been very much ashamed to let any one know that she could not read. I taught her in my chamber alone. . . .[2]

An extract from a letter written to Miss Grant from Amherst, December 23, 1835, is one of the few preserved to us in which Miss Lyon touches on questions of the day.

Have you seen Dr. Channing on Slavery? Really, I did not know that he had such a great soul, so much of the noble spirit of former days, composed of mildness and decision. He deals in great principles, instead of that personality which is the order of the day. In seeking after truth, it is delightful now and then to come to a stream which we can recognize as flowing from the great fountain, and which has not sub-divided into endless ramifications, till we forget that there is any fountain-head; or, to speak without a figure, till we forget that there are any great principles, on which we can rest unshaken amid all the clashing of opinions and sentiments. Dr. Channing has a suitable word of reproof, alike in season for the south, in their present excited and threatening attitude, for the abolitionists, in their furious and misguided zeal, and for the anti-ultras, who in their *prudence* and caution, are in danger of making concessions, tacitly at least, which are suited to endanger our first principles of duty, rather than hazard the odium of being called by some one *ultra,* and of being claimed by some of the ultra parties. This class needs reproof, perhaps, as much as either of the others, though in different degrees. And from this class we have more fear that the truth will suffer than from any other. I lament most deeply the havoc which misguided zeal is now making with the dearest interests of our country and the church; but should this fire sweep over the whole country, consuming all that is combustible, the soil will be left, the foundation will be unshaken. But I dread to have the

foundations broken up. I dread to have those who are the stability of the times driven, by the scarecrow of ultraism, from their high post in defence of truth, the rights of man, and the duties of the church. Dr. Channing's reproofs must come down with great weight on every conscience that puts on the coat so finely fitted. How much more heavily will reproofs bear upon the conscience, which come from great principles, than those captious fault-findings which fill many of our newspapers! I am delighted with the spirit in which this book is written." [3]

Mary Lyon was brought up on the theology of Jonathan Edwards and used his books as a basis for much of her teaching of religion to her young ladies. A letter of August 25, 1834, to Miss Brigham of Uxbridge Female Academy, at Uxbridge, Massachusetts, shows her making an effort to have his "History of Redemption" republished. Note the date, twelve days before the Ipswich parlor meeting which marked the inception of her seminary project. One would have thought her own concerns and those of the Ipswich school, which she was conducting in Miss Grant's absence, would have shut out all other interests.

Ipswich, Aug. 25, 1834.

My dear Miss Brigham,

I received your letter, stating your great & good success in obtaining subscribers for History of Redemption, & I have been delaying a reply for the sake of being able to state to you definitely all you would need to know about the publication. I will now give you a little history of the concern. The publishers dislike to publish such standard, excellent works on their own responsibility, because they do not sell well. Our reading community cannot appreciate so much excellence. They want the lighter trash. I heard it remarked not long since in a sermon on the state of our country, that we had become a more reading, but a less thinking people. This I believe to be true. Sometimes I almost fear that we shall read our minds away, till we shall scarcely be able to think at all on the great principles of action. We shall then be content to let the most valuable productions of our country go down & expire unnoticed, & be quite satisfied with a perpetual

succession of books of mushroom growth. I do feel it to be an important duty for all, who have anything to do in training our youth, to use every means to restore, in this respect, the taste of our puritan ancestors, & stay the degeneracy, which has already commenced. Efforts to encourage the reading of such books as Edwards' History of Redemption, are directly suited to promote this object.

A discussion of the problems of publishing follows, showing her efforts to get a sufficient number of subscriptions to guarantee the cost, but she feels herself to be under the necessity of giving up the whole for the present. She continues with a discussion of her school enterprise.

The great object in which I am so much engaged, advances very slowly. But I think it makes a little progress, & I am not at all discouraged. I do expect, that the Lord will prosper us in due time. For more than six months, we have been engaged in the great question about fining (*sic*) the location, & this not yet settled. I do not want to bear the responsibility of this, I do not think it best I should. I have been endeavoring to cast this responsibility on some proper authority. But I have not yet succeeded, though there is some increased light on the subject. . . .

Much love to your sisters & Miss Fisher,

Affectionately yours,
Mary Lyon.[4]

A month later she is writing to the Misses Brigham for subscriptions for the new school, as she raises the first $1000 from ladies.[5]

The influence of Mr. Emerson, who had been the intellectual leader of both Miss Grant and Miss Lyon, was always gratefully acknowledged. On October 24, 1831, Miss Lyon writes to Miss Grant of his visit to the school.

Reverend Joseph Emerson was in school this morning. . . . I rejoice to have him take up the business of lecturing to popular assemblies. His spirit is so pure and so exalted, that, whatever

may be his subject, I think he cannot fail to do something to purify the hearts of others, to raise the grovelling mind, and expand the contracted soul, though he may say some things which may be considered extravagant. O for a multitude of such souls as his! Could they be scattered all over the earth, this polluted and wretched world must soon become changed. The more I see, of the rest of the world, the more I admire, the more I love such a spirit as his. What a delightful place will heaven be! Thanks be to God, that "nothing shall enter there that defileth or maketh a lie!" . . .[6]

To Miss White she writes a year and more later (May 23, 1833):

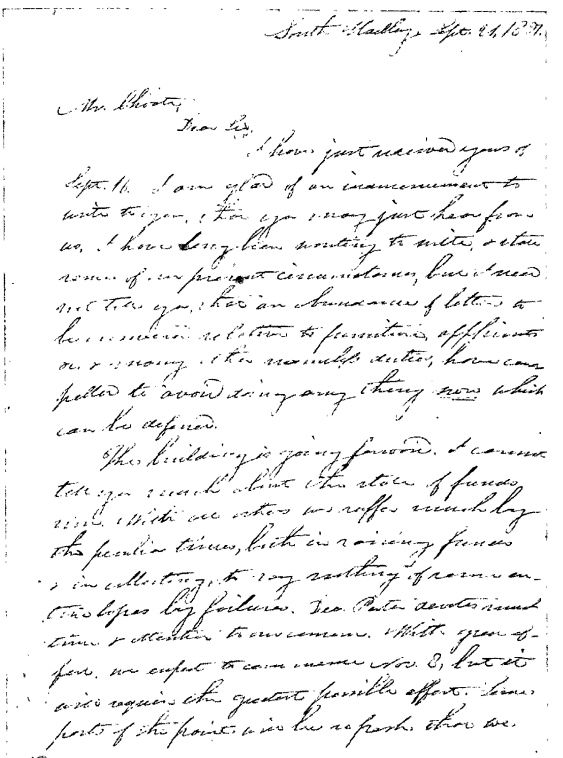
. . . Our dear Mr. Emerson has gone home to reap his everlasting reward. He died last week. During most of his sickness, his intellect was clear, and his soul in a heavenly frame. I love to think of him as in heaven. Who was better prepared to enjoy the delights of the heavenly world? May the living walk in his steps.[7]

To Miss Grant she writes, June 5, 1834.

Last evening, the Life of dear Mr. Emerson came. I seemed to have a visit with the good man as I glanced over the pages one after another. I do hope every one who loved him will enjoy the privilege of reading it. O that I might derive important and permanent profit from this precious book! How large a portion of my life has already gone, and to how little purpose! When I look at such a character as his, whose time was so systematically divided, so filled up with varied usefulness, and who was so persevering on so many different and seemingly opposite points, I feel a kind of stirring influence in my inmost soul, making me feel that I want to begin anew, like a little child, and live as I should live; though it must be a short life, comparatively. But when and how shall I begin? How shall I live, and how shall I labor? [8]

A month later (July 4, 1834) she writes her again on the same subject.

. . . Returning by way of Beverly, I passed the night in the hospitable home of kind Mrs. B., and spent some time in reading to her and another good lady from Mr. Emerson's life. It was a luxury, indeed, to read to people possessing such hearts. . . . I love to read his letters. I delight to dwell on his sincerity. Surely, mine eyes have seen one honest-hearted man in this dark, deceitful world. I am distressed with the apparent want of sincerity among Christians on the first and grand principles of duty; and more than all, with my own real deficiencies in this respect. I am distressed that so many momentous subjects of Christian duty should wear so different an aspect in the pulpit, and in the solemn and attentive audience, from what they do in the social circle, and in the business of life. I have often had seasons of being distressed with this subject. In reading Mr. Emerson's life, all these feelings have been renewed.[9]



LETTER TO DAVID CHOATE September 21, 1837

(*See page 213*)

TOWARDS MOUNT HOLYOKE SEMINARY

Now we come to the picturesque epic of the founding of Mount Holyoke Seminary, a story unique in educational annals. And we find Miss Lyon and her correspondents telling practically the whole story in the manuscript and other letters which cover each incident. For the days immediately preceding the opening of the school much of the material has come to light within a very short time. We are enabled to see in their proper perspective the procession of set-backs through which Miss Lyon and her courageous committee made their slow way towards their goal. We should like to read more about the objections which people raised to the main idea of girls' education, but Miss Lyon never comments on that phase of the undertaking. She has her work to do and does it, moving forward a step at a time, as the monthly calendar of her letters shows.

XIX

THE PARLOR MEETING

IPSWICH, SEPTEMBER 6, 1834

At last we come to that meeting in Miss Lyon's parlor at the Ipswich school which marks the inception of Mount Holyoke Seminary. Once more she is in charge of this school, at the close of her last regular service there, while Miss Grant is taking advantage of her presence for a protracted Western trip. The Hitchcock winter is still ahead of her, but many moves towards the new project are behind her.

Her preliminary circular had gone out in the late winter of 1834. One of the responses had been from Dr. Theophilus Packard,[1] that minister friend who as far back as the fall of 1829 had waited on Miss Lyon to express the wish of the Franklin Association of ministers that she continue her Buckland school or at least remain in that region. His daughter Louisa had been one of her Buckland pupils and later a teacher there. At the time of the sending out of the circular she was teaching at Ipswich, and Dr. Packard's letter to Miss Lyon contains a postscript to Louisa. We print it from the original manuscript.

"Your object is good and great, and *possibly* it may look greater to *you* than to some others, who do not look at it through a differant (*sic*) medium—less magnifying. However, the question comes up again and again, in looking over the interesting, good and great project, where is the money to be obtained to accomplish it? To strike out and mature the noble plan must have cost you much enterprising effort and perseverance; and I am persuaded it must cost *you* or *some body* else, as much of the same mental materials to find, and beg, and obtain the money to execute it.

"Having considered the subject, rather project, so little, I think of no material suggestion now which would probably

be useful to *you* who have reflected upon it so much. If the wings of your imagination are carrying you a little to (*sic*) high in the affair of this enterprise, you will understand, that what I have said, was designed only to clip them a *little*.

Yours with respect,
Theo. Packard [2]

Along with the circular Miss Lyon had sent (written across one corner) a hint that he might be persuaded to take the agency for collecting funds for the proposed seminary. Although he protested that he was sixty-five years old and could do only a little of the work at the outset, he began at once to work for the cause and carried the agency for the remainder of the year with an energy which his successors found it hard to equal. He brought the matter before the Franklin and Hampshire Associations of ministers and obtained their sanction for an attempt to establish such a seminary within their bounds. On May 13 he writes Miss Lyon that he has also "visited some friends at Conway and Amherst for counsel—enquiry," and urges her to meet him in Boston during the week before the "anniversaries," those church meetings which gathered ministers and laymen from all over Massachusetts.

It was he who advised the parlor meeting as the best method for launching the enterprise.

"It had been suggested," writes Mrs. Cowles (Eunice Caldwell), "that the first movement towards the object should be made in the Essex County Teachers' Association; but Dr. Packard, who was in Ipswich as the informal representative of his part of the State, objected that in such bodies there was apt to be much talk and little progress." [3]

The idea of a committee of gentlemen to carry the undertaking was Miss Lyon's. For years her letters to Miss Grant had contained expressions of her conviction that such a committee was necessary to win public confidence and place the whole matter on a broad, impersonal basis.

The meeting was held on September 6, 1834. Of it she writes to Miss Grant on September 8:

Dr. Packard came here last Wednesday evening, and left this morning. We talked much of the time, for three days, respecting the proposed seminary. A meeting of a few gentlemen was held on Saturday, and Revs. Dana and Packard, Professor Hitchcock, Rev. Mr. Felt, Mr. George W. Heard, Mr. David Choate, and General Howland were appointed a committee to make a commencement, and go on (provided they are successful) to appoint trustees, &c. A circular is soon to be printed, with the doings of the meeting.[4]

Already some of the names are familiar to us. Mr. Felt of Hamilton (a town adjoining Ipswich) and Mr. Heard, treasurer of Ipswich Seminary, had been active on the committee that sponsored the original Grant-Lyon appeal for funds for the endowment of Ipswich, and had been the faithful representatives from eastern Massachusetts on the committee that had canvassed the matter of starting a school at Amherst during 1832 and 1833. Mr. Choate was also of the Ipswich group. Dr. Dana was from Newburyport, General Asa Howland from Conway in Miss Lyon's home region. Professor Hitchcock represented not only the Amherst region but Conway, where he had been minister, and Sanderson Academy, of which he had been a trustee.

In the archives of Mount Holyoke College is preserved the official report of this same meeting, the first of a long series preceding the incorporation of the seminary. "Relative to the object of concerting measures for a new Female Seminary, described in a printed circular," the record begins. It continues with a list of the resolutions adopted, of which the following has special interest.

> "Resolved, that the Committee be particularly instructed to assure the public, that the course of instruction in the proposed Institution, if it be carried into operation, shall be, at least, of as elevated a character as that pursued at the Ipswich Seminary; and that the reduction of the expenses of the pupils shall not, in any degree, diminish their improvement, or retard progress in study."[5]

One more report comes directly from that parlor meeting. At the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of Mount Holyoke Seminary,

in 1862, a letter was read from Mr. Choate, who regretted that he could not be present to sit with General Howland on the platform that day.

> "I shall never forget, I think, . . . how gently we tried to rock its cradle, or how carefully we endeavored, at Miss Lyon's bidding, to carry it in our arms! You, who know the history from the beginning, hardly need to be reminded that it was Packard and Hawks * and Howland, from the Connecticut valley, and Dana and Felt and Heard and my humble self, from the neighborhood of the salt sea, that, in the early autumn of 1934, I should say, met at a private parlor in Ipswich, and inspected a few small seeds which Miss Lyon was wishing to put into the ground *somewhere,* at *some time,* allowing us to have something to say as to the place and time and so forth, yet not wholly surrendering anything entirely up to any; and still allowing us the innocent fancy of thinking ourselves, for the time being, co-workers with her.[6]

* Roswell Hawks did not come into the work until later that fall.

XX

MISS LYON RAISES THE FIRST THOUSAND DOLLARS

SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER, 1834

With a money-raising wisdom which matches the technique of the modern organized charity campaign, Miss Lyon had agreed with her committee that an initial sum of about one thousand dollars should be collected to finance the raising of the main fund. With that in hand, the committee could assure prospective donors that no part of their contributions would be turned towards the expense of agents or of printing and advertising. For this sum Miss Lyon turned "exclusively to ladies," with a wise foresight as to the effect such a start would have on the general public.

She began in the Ipswich school, of which she was at this time once more the acting head. Under the guidance of Miss Grant the school had been accustomed to make once or twice a year a contribution to one or another of the leading benevolent societies. Miss Lyon proposed to her girls and teachers that this fall they make their offering to her project, explaining that its purpose was to extend to those less fortunate financially the advantages of such education as they were receiving. They responded generously with gifts that came to a total of two hundred and sixty-nine dollars, which was more than a fourth of the sum needed.[1]

She turned next to the ladies of Ipswich, going herself from house to house to solicit subscriptions. The account of her pilgrimages by her fellow-teacher, Miss Caldwell (Mrs. Cowles), as she wrote it for the Hitchcock biography, is one of the classic contemporary pictures of Miss Lyon in action.

> "She talked, now with the lady of the house, now with the husband. She told the husbands, in a very good-natured but earnest way, that she had come to get them to cut off one little corner of their estates, and give it to their wives to invest in the form of a seminary for young ladies. She held

before them the object dear to her heart—the bringing of a liberal education within the means of the daughters of the common people, till it loomed up to them, for the time, as it did ever before her eyes.

"She put it to the lady whether, if she wanted a new shawl, a card-table, a new carpet, or some other article of elegance in her furniture or wardrobe, she could not contrive means to procure it. She spread out the whole subject, talking so fast that her hearers could hardly put in a word, answering every objection before it was uttered, and finally appealing to their individual humanity and benevolence. . . . Ladies that, in ordinary subscriptions to benevolent objects, did well to put down their fifty cents, gave her five or ten dollars of hard-earned money, collected by the slow gains of patient industry, and gave it of their own free will, yea, gave it as a privilege from which they would not have been willing to be debarred. They paid it on the spot, grateful that it had come to their hands at such a time as that." [2]

Do we wonder that, in response to such appeals, the Ipswich ladies gave four hundred and seventy-five dollars of her needed thousand?

Then she wrote letters, scores of letters, to former pupils at Ipswich and to friends of her own who were interested in the higher education of girls. We quote the one to Miss Brigham at Uxbridge, Massachusetts.

Taunton, Sept. 22, 1834.

My dear Miss Brigham,

You will see by the enclosed the interesting object is making some progress. This is the first attempt I have ever known of being made to advance female education by public beneficence. Whether the Christian public will listen to this first, this as yet only, but important call, is yet to be determined by fair experiment. One minister said to me, "The Christian public will not say, no to this first invitation to found a permanent female seminary, if it is presented in a favorable manner." In order that it

may be presented in a favorable manner, & that there may be a fair experiment, it appeared important, that there should now be raised a sum sufficient to support an able agent, & meet other needful expenses in raising the main fund. We have consequently undertaken to obtain from a few ladies, $1,000 for this object. There has been no systematic measure prepared to raise this sum. Our only plan is, that the friends of the object, as they have opportunity, should invite benevolent ladies to lend us their aid.

Now, my dear friend, can you do any thing? & what can you do? If you can do any thing, I doubt not that you will do it— & that you will do all you can. Every college & theological seminary at its commencement, finds individual gentlemen ready to set it forward with large donations, & I do hope that the hearts of some ladies will be opened to lend similar aid to this object. Are there not in your circle of acquaintance, either in Uxbridge or somewhere else, two or three ladies, if no more, who would be ready, at this important time, to help us forward with a handsome donation, of perhaps $20, or $30, or more each? But whether you will find any, who will do as much as this or not, do you not know of some of less means, but of equally willing hearts, who could make a donation, of $10 each? Would not ladies feel a deep interest thus to record their names in the cornerstone of an institution, which could thus be embalmed in their affections, & become an object of delightful remembrance through many succeeding years? I do hope that the hearts of ladies will be opened, most cheerfully & promptly to make out this $1,000, and thus show their willingness to rock the cradle of feeble infancy. About $300 is already obtained, & I do hope that the other $700 will come from some quarter. Occasionally a lady of enlarged benevolence, who has the care of her own money may help us, but in most cases, it can only be done by their pleading the cause before their fathers, & husbands, from whom I trust they will be enabled to lend their timely aid. . . .

Affectionately yours,
Mary Lyon.[3]

The concluding metaphors are mixed, but the appeal is fervent. One such letter brought one hundred dollars from a former pupil who was teaching in the far South.

The whole sum was raised in less than two months, a period during which Miss Lyon was also carrying the principalship of the Ipswich school. The thousand dollars was ready by the time it was needed, but at what a cost to herself one of Miss Lyon's intimate notes to Miss Grant reveals.

October 7, 1834.

I do not recollect being so fatigued, even to prostration, as I have been for a few weeks past, since I have been connected with this institution, except during your sickness in 1828, and a year ago last spring. The school business, as usual accumulated; the business relating to my future enterprise hung in suspense all summer, and then required nearly a week of my time near the close of school, besides absorbing much strength of intellect and of the inner soul.[4]

XXI

MEN AND MILESTONES

1834-1835

Miss Lyon had long since shown herself to be skilled in the art of dealing with the "gentlemen." Had she not been, she could never have launched her project. From now on the chronicle becomes, if looked at from one point of view, the story of her relations with them. She had made up her mind that the project, if it were to be an enduring success, must be carried on by men. This meant that she must be continually maintaining the delicate balance between their leadership and her own. A succession of letters tells the story.

She was helped in this difficult task by the fact that she had no inclination towards militant feminism. She accorded the "gentlemen" a large place in the sun, larger than that conceded by some of the other women leaders of the time. Although she was pioneering in the higher education of girls, there is little discussion of sex either in her talks or in her personal letters. "It is the mark of a weak mind," she told her students in class, "to be continually comparing the sexes and disputing and making out the female sex as something great and superior." [1] While she deplored the limitations which public opinion, both masculine and feminine, had placed upon girls' education, she did not undertake either personally or through her students a crusade against the general conventions of her time. Another of her recorded sayings seems to express a general principle: "In deviating from custom, avoid anything odd. Respect fashions, if they are modest, even if you do not follow them. Avoid rigidity and declaiming against articles." [2] Mary Lyon rarely, if ever, declaimed. But she had a quiet and effective way of ignoring artificial sex limitations when they stood in the way of her carrying on her self-appointed mission, which must have accomplished more than any words could have done in demonstrating the possibilities of her sex.

As for the "gentlemen," while she yielded them suitable respect and deference in their own sphere, no false modesty prevented her from

holding them steadfastly to her educational ideas and swinging them back into line when they showed signs of reverting to their original and timid notions. And how often they needed her guiding hand!

There was Dr. Packard, her first active worker. In December, 1834, three months after the parlor meeting at Ipswich, she writes of him:

In the plan for the proposed seminary, Dr. Packard's whole soul is enlisted. It is his first and great object, occupying his time by day and many of his thoughts by night. I sometimes think that in interest he will go even beyond myself. In devising ways and means to accomplish it, his mind acts with all its peculiar originality. I have long desired, almost more than any thing, that some gentleman, who has the habit of acting, would take hold of this object as his own, and devote to it his time and energies. It appears to me his zeal and action may be *essential* to the accomplishment of this object.[3]

The "peculiar originality" had devised a scheme which went directly against Miss Lyon's fundamental principle that the seminary should be created by public benevolence, as were the men's colleges, with no trace of "proprietary interest." In the memoir Dr. Hitchcock describes this Packard proposal as an "ingenious plan, with many guards against abuses, for raising funds by scholarships, their owners to have the right of sending scholars at less expense than others."[4] These scholarships of $250 were to be owned in whole, half, or quarter shares, the owner or owners being at liberty to send a pupil for fifteen dollars a year less than the others. Concerning it Miss Lyon writes to Miss Grant:

Dr. Packard has said to me several times that he was forming a screw, composed partly of benevolence and partly of selfishness, which he was designing to put upon the purses, and which he was confident would draw out the money; and when he had time, he would explain it to me. This week he has laid it before me. We have talked about it, most of the time, for three days. I saw objections which appeared to me so great, that I doubted whether it would be right for me to go forward.[5]

Here was a crisis indeed, when Miss Lyon and her most active supporter differed entirely on the fundamental principle, and three solid days of conference did not bring him around to her view.

Among those who, according to Dr. Hitchcock, "helped her to combat the doctor on his proprietary plan," [6] was a new recruit to the cause, Reverend Roswell Hawks of Cummington, a village in the Berkshires a dozen or so miles from Ashfield. As he was to be from this time on Miss Lyon's chief co-worker in raising funds, and her business agent and lieutenant at Mount Holyoke, the story of his coming into the cause deserves special attention.

Like the other young ministers whom we have met along the way, he had always had a special interest in education. He had taken young men into his home to fit them for college, as Dr. Packard had earlier taken him in for training, and had started two schools in his own parish. He had also sent one of his daughters across the hills to study with Miss Lyon in Buckland, and had been heard by his family to lament that while so much was being done for the higher education of boys, there was no endowed seminary in the land for girls. So much had this matter of girls' education weighed on his mind that he went up to that same anniversary meeting of the spring of 1834 which Dr. Packard and Miss Lyon were attending, with the distinct purpose of making some move on his own account in that direction.

Dr. Packard afterwards reported that Mr. Hawks came to him then and said, "I want to confer with you in regard to a plan for the education of the daughters of our land."

"If you have that in view," replied Dr. Packard, "you should see Miss Lyon of Ipswich, who is here for the same purpose." [7]

The contact began then, but for some reason Mr. Hawks did not get to the September parlor meeting in Ipswich. With Dr. Packard he did, however, visit Miss Lyon in Amherst. Of his coming with Miss Lyon to this December committee meeting his daughters tell the story, as he told it many times in the family during the succeeding years.

"Miss Lyon and father met at the house of Dr. Hitchcock in Amherst, to go to Boston to a meeting of the committee when foundation principles were to be settled. Long before dawn Mrs. Hitchcock had served their breakfast, and they were waiting for the stagecoach, but no coach came. They had

been forgotten, and as there was no other conveyance, they had to wait till the next morning."

It thus took them two days to reach Boston, days in which the meeting was in progress.

"Late in the afternoon," the story continues, "the two weary, anxious travelers entered the room to be told that principles had been adopted, plans formed, and the meeting was about to adjourn. . . . The conclusions reached related to two subjects: one involved the principle to be followed in soliciting funds, the other was a question whether Miss Lyon's name alone would be regarded by the public a sufficient guarantee for the success of an enterprise needing so much money. It seemed to the committee that Miss Grant's name was also needed, and therefore that the plan must be modified to meet her views, though it would require radical change."

Such was the state of affairs when Miss Lyon, accompanied by Mr. Hawks, arrived. Eleven words complete the story.

"But when Miss Lyon explained her plans, both decisions were reversed." [8]

The recurrence of Miss Grant's name in connection with the project is partly explained by the fact that Dr. Dana, Mr. Felt, Mr. Heard, and Mr. Choate all had for their background the Ipswich school. The partnership which had been so successful there, with the asset of Miss Grant's name and undoubted fame, seemed to them at this time to be almost essential. Mr. Hawks was appointed at this meeting the committee's agent for raising funds, a position which he continued to hold for the next three years, and also for many years after the seminary was opened.

The next milestone to be passed, following this important committee meeting of December, 1834, was that of locating the seminary. Miss Lyon had long insisted that this should be a matter of committee de-

cision, not of her personal preference. At Worcester, the halfway point for the eastern and western groups on the committee, a meeting was held on January 8, 1835, to decide this matter. It showed no small measure of loyalty to the cause for the members to assemble at this time of year. The thermometer was below zero when Miss Lyon, with Professor Hitchcock, left Amherst in the stage. "Having," according to the record, "taken some food and commended themselves to God, they took their seats in the stage some three or four hours before sunrise, each wrapped in a buffalo robe." [9] Miss Lyon commented afterwards that she had never suffered less on a journey in her life. Towards the meeting were traveling not only Miss Lyon and the committee members but also representatives from South Deerfield, Sunderland, and South Hadley, all Connecticut River valley towns, which were bidding for the proposed seminary.

Even when they all reached Worcester, Miss Lyon did not meet in committee session with the men. Such was the attitude of the masculine mind of the 1830's towards feminine participation in a business meeting of men, an attitude to which Miss Lyon lent herself readily, recognizing it as a necessary consequence of the method she believed most propitious for the undertaking's success. They had, however, desired that she should be near-by, "that they might consult her in the course of the meeting." Of the various steps by which they arrived at their decision, she writes to Miss Grant, on January 9:

> Last evening, about midnight, Mr. Felt came and told me that the question of the location at South Deerfield was decided in the negative. My heart was filled with gratitude to him who directs all events according to His own infinite wisdom. The other two places are to be considered to-day. Between them I had no choice, but it did appear to me that I could commit the whole to God more entirely than before. The decision, as Mr. Heard will tell you, is in favor of South Hadley.[10]

The Worcester vote did not wholly settle the matter, as it was conditioned on the proviso that "the inhabitants of that place South Hadley shall, within fifteen days, raise their subscription to $8000 or thereabouts—either in money or materials for building." [11] On this point Miss Lyon writes three weeks later from the Amherst home of

the Hitchcocks, where she was spending the winter, to Professor Hitchcock who was at that moment in Boston. This manuscript letter, but recently discovered, is illuminating in its report of the South Hadley attitude to the undertaking, and refreshing in the freedom of Miss Lyon's comments. If only we had more of these important letters in manuscript, unabbreviated by contemporary editing!

Amherst, Jan. 29, 1835.

Rev. & Dear Sir,

Mrs. Hitchcock has kindley (*sic*) given me a part of this sheet. We did mean to have had this mailed yesterday morning, but through a little mistake between her & myself, which was to write first, we found we should be too late to send to the office. You will like to hear a little about our Pangynakean * (*sic*) Sem. or rather the location. The Sabbath before last I spent at Mr. Tyler's. I was very much interested in my visit, & in my increased acquaintance with him. I think he will be a valuable friend to our cause. The first of the week, I visited the other village [South Hadley.] But it seemed to me cold & cheerless, though I now understand some of the causes better than I did then. I thought I could then believe what you stated about your success in giving your geological lecture.

I staid at Mr. Hayes's. He seemed far from being active, & forward. The fact was, that in consequence of what Mr. Bois (*sic*) wrote to him, he had gone forward to raise subscriptions, & had everywhere said that $5,000 would be enough. Of course he did not feel like going around among the people, to make a different statement, leading them to understand that the sum must be greatly increased. During the first week, Mr. Hawks endeavored to do what he could with individuals, to prepare them to make a second effort without exactly stating what amount they must raise. But some seemed to feel, that it was only a plan of the Committee to lead them to do more if they could, but that the institution would go there, whether they increased their subscriptions or not. Others would like very well to have the in-

* See page 164.

stitution among them, but they seemed prepared to exercise the grace of submission to have it placed somewhere else, provided the Committee were not satisfied with what the people were able to do. And I began almost to feel, that I should be easily reconciled too, to have another location.

Monday evening there was a public meeting, in which Mr. Hawks stated definitely what was the legal vote of the Committee, & he gave them no encouragement of receiving the institution, unless they should promptly reach the mark. A committee was appointed to go over the ground a second time for subscriptions. The meeting was adjourned till Friday evening, when the report of the Committee was to be given, & the business concluded. They now believed that something must be done, & there soon began to be a change in the aspect of things. Saturday evening I received a few lines from Mr. Hawks, in which he says, "I am happy to inform you, that the condition of the Committee has been fully complied with by the people of South Hadley. The meeting last evening was peculiarly interesting. All came forward to work with a real energy and spirit which I have rarely seen, & the sum was raised on the spot to the $8,000. There is a deepening interest on the subject every day & hour."

Thus the Lord has kindly favored us in the final result. And we have renewed encouragement to trust every future event connected with this great enterprize entirely with him. On the whole I think we have a very favorable location. I should like to write more, but I am in danger of taking all the paper. I should not have written so much, if I had not received full permission from Mrs. Hitchcock.

A kind Providence has watched over your family during your abssence.

Respectfully yours,
Mary Lyon.[12]

So was chosen the location described in the first circular (of June, 1835) [13] as "at South Hadley, Massachusetts, on the banks of the Connecticut, at the foot of Mount Holyoke, in the centre of New

England, easy of access from all quarters, and amid the most lovely scenery." As we read of the lengthy journeyings of the students of early years, as they came either from Springfield along the banks of the river and across by ferry, driving the remaining two or three miles to the village, or around the Mount Holyoke range from Amherst and Greenfield, we cannot feel that in those days it was easy of access. The bridges and motor highways were not yet built which were to unite this region with the main thoroughfares. The railroad which was opened in 1835 from Boston to Worcester did not reach Springfield until 1839. This was the day of stagecoach travel still, though schemes for railroads were under consideration in the legislature. But the turnpikes were better and the stages more frequent than in most parts of the country, and Belchertown (nine miles away), South Hadley itself, and Amherst and Northampton were on cross-country routes.

In closing, the committee stated that in selecting the site, they "had in view centrality, retirement, and economy, morality, and natural scenery." With their scenic choice no visitor to the lovely campus of Mount Holyoke College would differ.

XXII

THE NAME

On the question of a name for the proposed seminary a situation arose which threatened to pull Mary Lyon's ideal down from its heights to the level of the ridiculous. The trouble arose in a quarter that would seem least to be expected, from her friend and eager supporter, Professor Hitchcock. Miss Lyon had spent this entire winter, according to her wish expressed to Mrs. Hitchcock, in that hospitable Amherst home with these congenial and interested friends. With characteristic energy and with that passion for study which no executive duties could submerge, she took this opportunity to attend courses at the college and pursue her studies, partly for her own satisfaction and partly with a view to fitting herself for better leadership of this institution which she was seeking to found. Of this experience she writes on April 2, 1835, to her "very dear Mother."

I would be glad to visit you this spring before I go east, but you know the traveling is bad; and besides, Professor Hitchcock is now giving a course of lectures on geology, which I have long desired to attend, and I have thought I ought to make special efforts to hear them. They are given three times a week, and I have been able, so far, to attend every lecture. . . .

For special reasons, I think it best to keep myself disengaged from any school, till the new school goes into operation in South Hadley. But the work goes forward very slowly. It will be a great while before I can expect the privilege of laboring there. . . .[1]

But even in this peaceful scene, and under the Hitchcock roof, the "great idea" did not progress so smoothly as would be expected. In his eagerness to introduce the new project to the public, Professor Hitchcock, whose restless mind was always going off on tangents, invented for the future institution a Greek name which should com-

press within its syllables a full description of its purpose. *Pangynaskean* was the cognomen he created, *Pan* meaning "all," *gyn* for "woman," *askean,* to complete the title of a seminary in which all the powers of woman—physical, intellectual, and moral—should be cultivated. This title he promptly included in descriptive articles which he wrote for the newspapers.[2]

He intended to attract public attention, and he certainly succeeded. Editors pounced on the term with glee and directed the shafts of their sarcasm at the "whole-woman-making school." Friends of Miss Lyon were really concerned lest the success of the enterprise be hazarded by these newspaper attacks on the idea, but at least the project got free advertising which no staid and decorous announcement would have won for it. From her own pen we have only one comment, significant in its restraint. To Miss Grant she writes:

I wish a little could be said to lead that part of the community who *would* attend to things and not to words only, to direct their attention to the magnitude of the object, rather than to one *undesirable, temporary,* word, and to lead those who *would* expend their zeal in promoting that which is good and important, and not in opposing trifles, to spend the time and interest they have to spare in aiding the great cause with which the new institution is connected, rather than in opposing the mere suggestion of a peculiar name.[3]

At a meeting of the committee held in April, 1835, the subject of a name came up for discussion. Dr. Todd, a new member from Northampton, said, "Call it Mount Holyoke; then the name will indicate the locality," [4] and his sensible suggestion was promptly adopted.

XXIII

THE WHEATON INTERLUDE

1834-1835

Only seven letters written by Miss Lyon to the Wheatons remain to us, but around them cluster items of information, bits of reminiscence, and letters of teachers and pupils which show the important part Mary Lyon had in the inception of this seminary. The amazing fact brought out by a checking of their dates with other letters is the way the Wheaton interest is sandwiched in between her activities at the Ipswich school and her arduous labors towards the founding of her own seminary.

In the winter of 1834 Mary Lyon had issued the first circular announcing her own project. That proposal was already exciting considerable comment in interested circles when on March twenty-sixth there died in Boston Eliza Wheaton Strong (Mrs. Woodbridge Strong), only daughter of Judge Laban Wheaton of Norton, Massachusetts.[1] Judge Wheaton was eighty years old, a graduate of Harvard, who had sat for seven years in the Massachusetts Legislature and for eight years in Congress, and had been Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas and since 1819 of the Court of Sessions, a man described as combining "with intellectual strength of a very high order, acute legal knowledge and untiring application to his professional duties." Furthermore he was a man of wealth.

The immediate impulse of the sorrowing father was to establish some memorial for his daughter. Here his thoughts were directed away from the idea of the conventional monument by his young daughter-in-law, Eliza Baylies Wheaton,[2] who said, "Why not make it a *living* monument? Why not establish here a school where other daughters shall grow to a worthy and beautiful Christian womanhood?" So there steps into the picture another of those women of the early nineteenth century to whom women's education owes a debt.

This girl, then twenty-five years old, who had come into the Wheaton family years before as bride of the Judge's son and name-

sake, Laban Morey Wheaton, was as different as possible from the other women of the group, stately Zilpah Grant, high-strung, intellectual Catharine Beecher, ardent, pioneering Mary Lyon. Growing up in Northbridge and Uxbridge, near the border of Rhode Island on the road from Woonsocket to Worcester, where the family iron works had been established since pre-Revolutionary days, she attended Uxbridge Academy, opened in 1820 under Squire Jaquith. He was a Harvard graduate, described as having a talent for teaching and for developing the minds of his pupils. Later she went to the Young Ladies' High School in Boston, over which presided at that time Ebenezer Bailey as principal and Miss Maria Weston as preceptress. To this school, one of the best in the state, with its high tuition price of $80 a year, went the daughters of Boston's best families. There they obtained a "sound English education," with the "branches" taught by "Professors in French, Italian, Spanish, music, and dancing" as extras. From this school she went at nineteen to the stately Norton home with pillared piazza and beautiful box-bordered gardens which young Mr. Wheaton had built for her.

Her own favored school life had evidently meant much to young Mrs. Wheaton and had awakened in her a deep desire that other girls might have the same or greater opportunities. Years later when she was asked by Lucy Larcom, the chronicler of Wheaton Seminary, if the thought of such a school was first suggested to her at the time of Mrs. Strong's death, she said quickly, "Oh, no!", adding that she had long felt the need of better education for girls.[3]

With the creation of a new girls' school in mind, there was one person to whom the Judge and young Mrs. Wheaton naturally turned for counsel, Mary Lyon, who had carried on the famous Ipswich school for nearly two years in Miss Grant's absence and was now spending her last year there as associate principal while she broadcast her plans for a seminary with permanent endowment. That they found an eager and interested adviser the records testify. Who should head the school? Miss Lyon had the answer: her own teacher, Eunice Caldwell, who had been one of the first four girls to graduate in 1829 from the Ipswich school, having come there with Miss Grant from Derry. Miss Caldwell was pledged to go with Miss Lyon to her new seminary whenever it should open, but that need not stand in the way of this more immediate service. On July 8, 1834, Miss Lyon writes to young Mr. Wheaton.

Ipswich, July 8, 1834.

Mr. Wheaton,

Sir,

I have received your communication, making application for a teacher. I have conversed with one lady, who has a long time been engaged as teacher in this seminary about engaging at Norton, and there is a little probability that she may decide to accept the invitation. Miss Caldwell is the lady. She will do well, is very well acquainted with all parts of the system adopted here, and has a talent for teaching. It is not certain, however, that she will engage there, and if not, I shall be looking around for another. Miss Caldwell wishes to devote herself to the business of teaching, not to promote mainly her own interests, and happiness, but to promote the present and future and eternal welfare of the rising generation. She does not wish to engage in any place, without knowing so much of the situation, as to know that it would be favorable for the promotion of these objects. If she should after further consideration, think favorably of the plan of laboring in your place, before any decision is formed, I think it will be advisable that she should visit your place, and learn what she can on the spot, which she could not learn in any other way. It will also be rather necessary that I should go with her, as she will depend on me so much to aid in making all preparatory arrangements. It will be rather difficult for me to be absent from this school, and more difficult to have one of our teachers absent at the same time; but probably in the course of a few weeks, we can make arrangements to be absent if it should seem necessary to accomplish this object.

You may expect to hear from me again in two or three weeks from this. In the meantime, I should be glad to hear from you again, if you have anything to communicate.

I rejoice that your father has decided to go forward in this benevolent undertaking. May he live to see great and good results, and have abundant cause to thank God, that this was put into his heart. And may you, Sir, live to see greater things than his eyes shall behold, and may you ever bless our Heavenly Father,

who has given to your dear and honored father, a heart to care for those beyond his own household. Such a spirit in a father, is a rich legacy to children, which cannot be estimated in silver and gold.

Any service which I can consistently render you in behalf of this benevolent undertaking, I shall render most cheerfully.

Respectfully yours,
Mary Lyon.[4]

From another letter, of August 18th, referring her visit until the close of the term and advising that they wait to open the school until the following spring as Miss Caldwell cannot engage until then, it is evident that she has meanwhile met him and Mrs. Wheaton in Boston and "conversed on general principles."

Miss Caldwell seems at this time to have been a modest and retiring young woman who needed Miss Lyon as spokesman. On September 25, 1834, we find Miss Lyon supplying to "the Trustees of the Female School in Norton" the contract which the trustees "when appointed" were to sanction. The arrangement is the one familiar to us from similar schools of the period. The trustees are to furnish the building, free of rent. Miss Caldwell is to receive the tuition fees for compensation and be responsible for all expenses connected with the school. Again, as in Derry and Ipswich, there arose the question of living accommodations for the pupils, that rock of difficulty on which the waves of enthusiasm for girls' education seem always to have broken. From Amherst, where she is spending the winter in the Hitchcock home, Miss Lyon writes her views and those of Miss Caldwell as to the undesirability of having four girls in one room, a plan which seems to have appealed to the families opening their homes to students. She also refers to the prospectus for the school which she is submitting. It later appeared in the newspapers.

Amherst, Dec. 23, 1834.

Mr. Wheaton,

Sir,

Miss Caldwell and myself have conversed much on the subject of having more than two young ladies in one room. We should regret very much the necessity of such an arrangement. If the

privilege of putting four in a room is granted to one family, all others will claim the same, and it will be very difficult to stop. This feature of the Ipswich Female Seminary of allowing only two to occupy the same room has been held up as a particular excellence, and has often been published. If this is given up at Norton, I think that many will consider that you have relinquished one of the most important features of the Ipswich Seminary. I very much desire to see you, and state to you more fully our views, and the various arguments on this subject, before the question is settled. Perhaps I shall be able to go to Norton sometime in the course of the winter. I may be in Worcester in about two weeks from this. If so, I may then go on to Norton. Will you drop me a line by return of mail, stating the distance from Worcester to Norton, and whether there is a direct stage every day, or what days? What do you think of the notice I have written? Do you see any objections to any part?

Miss Caldwell unites with me in respectful regards to yourself and Mrs. Wheaton.

Respectfully yours,
Mary Lyon.[5]

The problem of living accommodations would not down. The next letter, of February 25, 1835, written from Ipswich, deals with the provision for Miss Caldwell that she should be allowed to room alone and have some few privileges beyond those granted to the students.

Ipswich, Feb. 25, 1835.

Mr. and Mrs. Wheaton,
Dear Friends,

* * * * * * *

When a teacher boards with so many scholars and takes so much responsibility, which all other families must take on themselves, and which really belongs to those who receive the boarders, it is common to grant some favor in return, and I think it would be just and suitable. Some families here would have been willing to give a teacher her board, if they could have the privilege of having one in the family. I do not know what Miss Caldwell will

think about this, but I should propose only that they should always furnish Miss Caldwell a room *alone,* and expect to do more errands for her than they would for the young ladies, and furnish a little more and better furniture for her, than for the young ladies, and that her board should be the same price of the others. This would be reasonable, and no family who will look at it will complain. Miss Caldwell will be satisfied with whatever will be for the best good of the school, and what will be best for her successors. But it appears to me, that any less favors granted in the boarding house to the principal of the seminary would operate against the reputation of the institution, and against the obtaining an able teacher to be at the head of the institution. I have read this to Miss Grant, and requested her opinion, and she says that these favors the teacher ought by all means to receive, and at least one more which I forgot to mention, that the principal should at any time feel at liberty to receive a friend as a visitor several days, to occupy the chamber with herself without charge. One lady is expected to take one of the boarding houses here, which can accommodate about the same number as that house, and designs to give a superior young lady her board for taking the same responsibility in the house, which a teacher would take.

At first Miss Grant queried whether it would not be more suitable that Miss Caldwell should receive some pecuniary compensation, besides the extra privileges which I have enumerated. But on the whole we are agreed, that we would request nothing but these favors. These would be *just,* as well as suitable. If Miss Caldwell's successor should go into a larger boarding house, it might be proper that the family should allow something more. That may be for an after consideration. I feel it to be very important to take such a course as will promote the prosperity of your institution. But we shall have opportunity to converse about this afterwards. Only when you converse with those who take the boarding house, it will be necessary to mention, that for the sake of having the teacher they must give up one chamber to her without a roommate, and grant the other privileges which

I mention. If they understand it at first, they will not object, but if they should not understand it till later, they might complain.

Respectfully yours,
Mary Lyon.[6]

That the ladies made their point about having only two girls in a room can be seen by the prospectus of the school, written by Miss Lyon and published in the newspapers in March. In this announcement it is stated that the general character of the school shall be similar to that of Ipswich Female Seminary.

It is well known [Miss Lyon continues], that the Seminary at Ipswich is rendered much more pleasant and profitable to adult young ladies by the exclusion of younger misses. As schools adapted to the wants of little girls are so much more numerous than those designed particularly to benefit young ladies of more mature age, it is believed that the rejection of younger scholars will render this new institution a greater blessing to the community, even though the number of pupils should in consequence be much smaller at first. None will therefore be received into the School under thirteen years of age.[7]

In her draft of the contract for Miss Caldwell, Miss Lyon had given the age limit as fourteen years, "as at Ipswich," but the extra year had evidently been added in the interval. In practise the ages of the pupils ran much older.

About forty girls gathered for that "dull morning of April, 1835," when a bell summoned them for the opening of Wheaton Seminary. A teacher met them at the door and showed them where to put their bonnets. They filed in to seat themselves at the desks (described as "straight up and down board"), and gaze at the two settees set on the platform in front of the blackboards, for teachers and trustees. As the bell ceased ringing, in walked Miss Caldwell with a cheery "Good morning, young ladies." Two other teachers accompanied her. Pupils gave their names and ages, and Miss Caldwell began a class in grammar. Another school for girls had been added to the New England list, to be rated in educational annals as the third endowed school of the time, the first having been at Derry, with its $4000 bequest, the

second, Abbot Academy in Andover, in 1829, with Mrs. Abbot's $1000.[8]

Miss Lyon spent a good deal of that first year at Norton, in the intervals when she was not on the road traveling for her future school. A letter of the following month suggests one of her activities there.

Norton, May 19, 1835.

My dear Miss Grant:

I am not fully decided about my manner of spending the summer. I design to make one excursion, which will occupy a few weeks, to visit my relatives, to visit South Hadley, Amherst, Northampton, and some other towns in the vicinity of South Hadley, and perhaps some in Franklin county, to exert an influence in favor of our cause. I think I shall take this excursion about the time of commencement at Amherst.

Considering that it must be at least two years before I can commence teaching at South Hadley, I think it best to spend some time in study, though I should not think it wise at my age to give up active labor for study. The time being providentially thrown on my hands, the case is different. I should prefer not to say much about it, because I do not expect to make much progress, or to retain much of what I gain; but much more, because it seems ridiculous for a lady of forty to be trying to make over her education. What time I do devote to study, I can probably take much better this year than next, and I can find no better place than this. Here, no one inquires what I am doing, or how I spend my time.[9]

That the breeze of her energetic personality swept through the Wheaton school at frequent intervals is attested not only by more formal records but also by an amusing if somewhat unsympathetic pen picture of her activities given by one of the pupils. This schoolgirl begins by telling of her studies.

"They tried us all in writing and those who could write well enough were put to drawing. . . . The rest are to go through a system which will take the greater part of them

six weeks. . . . We have been driven through everything almost by a Miss Lyon, a lady who is here at present. She has been the Preceptress of Ipswich Seminary, but has resigned that office and now goes around establishing seminaries and looking after those placed in her care. This is one of them and she is trying to establish another near Mount Holyoke. They call it South Hadley. It is expected to be done in about a year, when Miss Caldwell will leave this and take charge of that. When Miss Lyon has nothing but writing to do, she comes here and makes this place her home.

"But I had almost forgotten to tell you what she makes us do. About three weeks since, she came into the school-room one morning and said she wanted the whole school to commence at the beginning of Arithmetic and see how long we would be in going over the first fifty pages, and we might say ourselves how long we thought it would take us. Some said one day, some two, and some a week. I was among those who said two days, but some of the girls said one day, so I went to work and finished my fifty pages in one day and about ten more, making sixty pages in a day. After this she gave us lessons to get and sums to do and kept us all day long running out of one room into another, upstairs and down, till we have almost run the shoes off our feet. I wish you could have seen us running to and fro and her after us singing out quick, step a little quicker, and giving one a push and another a pull all over the room. I never went so quick in my life that I know of. This week we have been driven through all the rules as far as we have been and have had composition to write every day last week and every other day this week, beside reading, spelling and writing two hours each day and singing one hour. This week we had for our studies reading, writing, spelling, singing, composition, grammar and arithmetic. Next week we shall have the same, then the week after we take our other studies again, and they intend to drive us through Watts on the Mind and physiology in a fortnight, then we have the last three weeks to review in and in that

time we are to go through all the studies we have been in this summer.[10]

To this picture we must add two other contemporary items. A student of those days reminiscing long years afterwards says,

"Miss Lyon of Norton days was young enough and simple enough to care for fringing curls and becoming head-gear." [11] In the "Semi-Centennial Sketch of Wheaton Seminary" we read that "through the graphic words of students of those opening days we see again the brisk figure of Mary Lyon moving among them . . . and hear her quick 'Hasten on, young ladies! you are not aware of the habit of lagging you are forming,' as they passed to recitations. Even her gait is recalled—her business-like manner of moving swiftly forward, which made her seem to stoop as she walked; and her peculiar way of bringing a long lead-pencil down upon her left fore-finger while she talked earnestly, her eyes fixed upon distances others could not pierce." [12] Add to this her constant admonition, "Do not waste the precious moments," with Miss Caldwell's remembered motto, "Always be in haste, but never in a hurry," and we see Judge Wheaton's Seminary briskly started with the driving force which has carried it through one hundred years of educational service and on into its second century, now on a collegiate basis.

XXIV

A HARD YEAR

1835-1836

I have been thinking [writes Miss Lyon to Miss Grant, April 8, 1835] whether the buildings might not be commenced this summer, laying out ten or twelve thousand dollars, on such a plan that the buildings can be extended when more funds are obtained. Considering the field yet to be gone over, would it not do to presume on a few thousand dollars? Would it not do, by some sacrifice to turn what is subscribed to be paid in future years into ready money? I fear to let the present season pass away without having any thing done on the buildings, lest friends may be discouraged, and enemies take occasion to injure the cause. I wish Messrs. Heard and Choate would look at this subject, and come and attend the meeting next Wednesday.

It seems to me also desirable, that every important branch of the business should be committed to a small executive, to men who are qualified to do definite things needed, and are known to be willing to work for this cause. The business to which I refer is *finding* and appointing agents, devising ways and means of raising funds, making arrangements towards building, making contracts, obtaining plans &c.[1]

This was the meeting at which the name was chosen, a meeting at Amherst which preceded by more than a month her letter to Miss Grant telling of her summer plans and her intentions to be often at Norton. Suitable resolutions, embodying Miss Lyon's proposals for a small publicity committee, were passed, but all that came forth in that summer was an effort to invite ladies of the Connecticut River valley to raise a thousand dollars towards the object, as had the Ipswich friends, with also a circular especially directed by this ministerial group to the churches, announcing the proposed institution as in-

tended for the daughters of the church and urging the Christian public to contribute thirty thousand dollars.[2]

The response to this line of appeal was discouraging. Even the Massachusetts Association of Ministers was lukewarm, contenting itself, after some committee disagreement, with passing three mild and innocuous resolutions, the first, in favor of Christian education among females, the second granting that sufficient efforts to this end had not been made, and the third recommending Mount Holyoke Female Seminary "and any other institution which designs to effect a similar object." [3] Part of the apathy or opposition here was because the ministers were committed to their own local academies and could not give support to so general a project.

Now Miss Lyon set herself to the task of traveling up and down New England, sometimes with Mr. Hawks, sometimes alone, to interest people in the cause and get subscriptions from them. There were two ways, Miss Lyon wrote later to Miss Beecher, to accomplish her object: the first, to interest one, two, or a few wealthy men to do the whole, the second, to interest the whole New England community, beginning with the country population, and working in towards those of the cities.[4] To Miss Grant she had said (March 1, 1833): "My thoughts, feelings, and judgment are turned toward the middle classes of society. For this class I want to labor, and for this class I consider myself peculiarly fitted to labor. To this class in society would I devote, directly, all the remainder of my strength, (God permitting,) not to the higher classes, not to the poorer classes. The middle class contains the main springs and main wheels, which are to move the world." [5]

To this class she now turned, journeying hither and thither, always with the green velvet bag that became the recipient of many contributions, small and large, from many kinds of people. In doing so, she publicized her seminary.

> "She went hither and thither by public conveyances," writes Eunice Caldwell Cowles, "with Mr. Hawks, or any other friend of the enterprise. Traveling the road from Boston to the Connecticut often, she could scarce ride any ten miles of the route without being recognized by some fellow-traveler, whose cordial salutation would introduce her to the company. All felt very well acquainted with her, as soon as they heard

her name, and she would soon be invited to detail the progress of the enterprise. Being infallibly certain that the object would commend itself to the good common sense and best impulses of true New Englanders, she improved every opportunity of unfolding its merits to any who seemed capable of comprehending them, whether acquaintances or strangers. She could make herself heard easily, although the road might be a little uneven, and would expatiate on the subject as freely as in her own parlor. . . . Many a man can say, "I saw Miss Lyon once; I met her in the stage coach; an original character, quite." [6]

To the friends who were distressed by her wandering life and protested the unconventionality of her methods, she was wont to protest in this fashion.

"What do I that is wrong? I ride in the stage coach or cars without an escort. Other ladies do the same. I visit a family where I have been previously invited, and the minister's wife, or some leading woman, calls the ladies together to see me, and I lay our object before them. Is that wrong? I go with Mr. Hawks, and call on a gentleman of known liberality at his own house, and converse with him about our enterprise. What harm is there in that? If there is no harm in doing these things once, what harm is there doing them twice, thrice, or a dozen times? My heart is sick, my soul is pained with this empty gentility, this genteel nothingness. I am doing a great work. I cannot come down." [7]

But these brave words were spoken after she had been engaged in this business for many months. This summer of 1835 it was new to her, and it took all her Christian faith to sustain her in her wanderings, with the prospect of their indefinite continuance. To her mother and sister she writes from Northampton, July 23rd.

I cannot undertake to tell you where I have been, and what I have been doing, since I last saw you. I seem to be ever busy, and

yet I accomplish nothing. I wander about without a home, scarcely knowing one week where I shall be the next. In this way, I expect to live, *at least* until one year from next spring, the earliest possible time that our new institution can open. And then, I may only make a change for a situation of overwhelming cares. But I have no doubt that I am following the leadings of Providence. His dealings towards this new enterprise have been such as should lead me to trust wholly in the Lord. Every token of success has been rather strongly marked by his hand; and every trial and discouragement has been such, that when good comes, we feel constrained to say, "This is the work of the Lord."

In looking back, I feel that, whatever may be the result, I can never regret that these things were not directed differently. It seems to me more and more that this institution, and other similar ones, are a necessary part of the great system of means now in operation for the conversion of the world. When I look abroad and see how much abounds that is contrary to the spirit of the gospel, I sometimes feel it to be a precious privilege to pray, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven." Whatever we are permitted to do, in accordance with these designs, is a precious privilege. The feeble efforts which I am allowed to put forth in co-operating with others in laying the foundation of this new seminary, I feel will probably do more for the cause of Christ after I am laid in my grave, than all I may have done in my life before. Do not cease to pray for this seminary, that in every succeeding age it may be most sacredly the Lord's; that no wicked hand may ever be allowed to turn it aside from its consecration to the Redeemer.[8]

It required more than an interest in education to carry through such an enterprise as that which Mary Lyon had undertaken. In the case of Mount Holyoke Seminary, as of many other schools and colleges of these early days, one doubts whether it could have been carried through to success without the religious intensity belonging to its period.

That Miss Lyon did not find it easy to lay aside her personal inclinations and approach strangers, numerous letters and reports show. In this summer of 1835 Rev. Dr. Joseph Penney,[9] a Northampton

minister had been put on the committee. She writes of her reluctant going to his house.

Dr. Penney had simply been put on the committee, but all we could say was, that he was a general friend. He had on his hands a larger weight of gratuitous business than most other ministers, besides having the care of the largest church in the United States. And he has been abroad a part of the summer on account of his health. My heart almost failed me as to attempting to invite his attention to this object, but as I supposed that with him much wisdom existed on some important particulars, I thought it best to try. . . .

Mr. Tyler took her to Northampton. Dr. Penney entered at once into the whole matter, helped plan for the next meeting, etc. Miss Lyon was greatly relieved, as was Mr. Tyler. She continues:

It is very easy to converse with Dr. Penney. A child would feel no embarrassment in consulting him in the most familiar manner.[10]

It is interesting to note that Dr. Penney was called that very year to be president of Hamilton College in New York. Hence, his disappearance from Mount Holyoke councils.

A difficult personal situation was created at this time, when the fortunes of the enterprise seemed to be running low. The committee invited Miss Grant to unite with Miss Lyon in taking charge of the proposed seminary. This, as we know from earlier statements, would have meant radical changes in the plan. In regard to this matter we have no complete manuscript letter of Miss Lyon's, and the two printed extracts from October letters doubtless passed through Mrs. Banister's (Miss Grant's) editing before they were published in 1851. In all these matters involving personalities, we must remember that at the time of the publication of the Hitchcock volume many of those concerned were still living. At least these two extracts throw no light on the situation, but show only Miss Lyon's Christian attitude in her trials.

Norton, October 24, 1835.

My dear Sister:

You will doubtless be glad to know something about Mount Holyoke Seminary. The work goes on slowly. I hope they will be able to commence building next spring. We have much to try our faith, and much to excite our hopes. I love to look at the hand of Providence as connected with this enterprise. With how much wisdom and goodness are trials and blessings mingled together in our cup! The work of endeavoring to found and build up this seminary is one which I trust the Lord will own and bless. But I do not expect that it will be carried forward as on flowery beds of ease. This I have never asked. I only ask that it may receive the smile of Providence in that way which shall best promote the interests of the great cause to which it is consecrated.

I hope that in your prayers you will commend this enterprise to God.[11]

In her letter to Miss Grant, written while the latter was considering the committee's invitation, she admits that "everything appears . . . dark with Egyptian darkness," and prays that all interested in the institution may be humble and submissive. For herself the daily word is, "Not my will, but thine, be done." [12] That cloud passed. Miss Grant's name is not again mentioned in this connection. Miss Lyon's next letter is to Abigail Moore in Virginia offering her a position in the new seminary.

Her next special contact, reported in a January letter to Miss Caldwell, was with Joseph Avery of Conway, Massachusetts, a well-to-do farmer, father of three sons and three daughters, of whom she says that he has probably given more to benevolent objects, in proportion to his means, than any other man in New England.[13] He was to become, after the opening of the seminary, one of its most devoted and hard-working trustees. From the time of this visit date generous gifts to the cause, gifts comprising, according to Dr. Hitchcock, "much of the surplus revenue of his rock-bound but productive farm." [14] The circumstances of one of them furnished a story which Miss Lyon used to love to tell in later years to her girls. It was long after this first visit when she went back to him, although he had already given

largely, to tell him that the school project was in great straits and to ask him if he could help. He heard her case, then looked across at his wife and said to her:

"I had set aside a sum of money for shingling the house this year."

"I can set the milk pans under the leaky places another year," she replied instantly.

So Mrs. Avery comes into that list of trustees' wives who joined with their husbands in supporting Miss Lyon in her efforts for girls' education. Of the practical nature of Mr. Avery's service to the seminary we get a hint from letters in his own hand in the archives reporting to Miss Lyon purchases of butter in 500-pound lots and discussing with her the price of dried apples.[15]

To this winter of 1836, and to Conway, belongs another precious Mount Holyoke tradition, made vivid by the presence in the Mary Lyon room at the college of some silver dollars blackened by smoke as well as by age. On this same trip Miss Lyon visited two maiden sisters of Conway, Miss Lucy and Miss Anne Maynard, who were moved by her story to pledge one hundred dollars each from their moderate income. But before they made the payment, misfortune overtook them. Their house was burned to the ground on a Thanksgiving Day by a fire left to bake their holiday dinner. But out from the ashes were drawn next day these few silver dollars which had been laid aside as a nest-egg towards their Seminary fund. The two ladies asked no indulgence because of their changed circumstances, but set themselves at once at work to earn money to pay their pledge. When they sent in the final sum, these dollars were sent with the rest. But Miss Lyon could never bear to have such precious money spent, and made up the amount from her own funds.[16]

In the midst of the stress and strain of this winter of begging and planning, it is good to have preserved a bit of intimate correspondence between Miss Lyon and the children of the Hitchcock family, with whom she had spent the previous winter. Mary Hitchcock was at this time eleven years old, Catherine, two years younger, and Edward, seven years old. The baby, Jane, mentioned in the postscript, was not quite three years old. We include the letters of Mary and Catherine (which we have in manuscript) in order to explain the allusions in Miss Lyon's long reply, and show the children's intimacy with her. Her letter to Edward, of the same tenor, we must omit for lack of space.

Wednesday January 13, 1836.

"Dear Miss Lyon

"This afternoon after getting our lessons we were to devote the rest of the afternoon in writing a letter as we promised. I miss you very much in our family here and especially in my studying. I have made considerable progress in my Latin I think. I have got to the 6th line on the eighty third (new book) page. I think the verbs are very interesting as you said they would be. I think it is very pleasant it find out all the difficulties studying which I am trying to do now. I think Latin is a very pleasant study, but I have not made much progress in knitting. I might have knit more at Mrs. Smiths had I not forgotten to take some yarn with me.

"I had a very pleasant visit at Mrs. Smiths and enjoyed it very much.

"The term closes today and Papa has gone to Conway to give a course of lectures on Geology. Give my love to Miss Caldwell and tell her I shall write her soon.

"We have all enjoyed very good health since you left here. Jane says give my love to Miss Lyon and Miss Caldwell.

From your affectionate friend and pupil.
Catharine Hitchcock"

"Dear Miss Lyon,

"Edward and I have just finished reciting our lesson, Justitia est immortalis 39th page Second Edition. Today we studied 9 lines each by ourselves alone and recited without one failure. I like it better the more I study it. Last evening we all went to the exhibition at College and staid till after 10 oclock. The performances were very interesting. Give my love to Miss Caldwell.

from your affectionate friend and pupil, Mary Hitchcock.

Wednesday eve. I have let the children write right on as you gave them full license to write as they pleased. I shall permit

them to send it on, otherwise I should think it proper to rewrite & correct.

I am glad you enjoyed your visit so highly at Mr. Avery's.—I knew you would. . . .

I have got along with the children's latin thus far better than I feared—I have not kept a bill, but they have understood that a faithful report was to be sent to you & that has acted as a very powerful stimulus.

We do miss you in our family very much but you may tell Miss Caldwell that I have some consolation in thinking that what is my loss is her gain. . . .

Pray write soon—your very sincere friend

O W H" [17]

To this group of letters Miss Lyon makes prompt reply.

Ipswich, Feb. 8, 1836

My dear Mary & Catherine,

You will be surprized to see my letter dated at this place. I came here last Friday to spend a few weeks. Your very welcome letter of Jan. 15 I received. I did hope that I should have received your second before I left Norton. Miss Caldwell will forward it to me. You may hereafter direct to this place till you hear from me again. I am greatly interested in your progress in Latin. I could scarcely realize that you had had time to go so far. I carefully compared your statement with the book so as to see how far it was, & I am now using the New England privilege of guessing how far you will say in your next that you have proceeded. I hope I shall hear very soon. I like to be making a little calculation for you from week to week. I doubt not that your Latin will enable you to improve very much in perseverence (*sic*). If you make a special effort to learn your lessons every day so promptly & seasonably, that you can depend entirely on yourselves, not rendering it necessary that your mother should ever remind you, it will tend very much to improve you in promptness, & persever-

ence (*sic*). From the time that you receive this, will you both observe yourselves particularly on this point, & tell me in your next how you succeed? I should like to know if you cannot have that moral power over yourselves, & that entire control, so that you will always think about your lessons so that no one will have to remind you. I doubt not that on this point you can succeed perfectly. Mary, I am exceedingly gratified, that you & Edward should have succeeded in studying one lesson of 9 lines by yourselves, & reciting without a failure. I hope you will do such things often, it will so encourage your mother. I almost fear that the care of your studies with all her other business will be too much for her strength. Do you not fear so? If she should be sick next summer, how sorry we should all be. . . .

Catherine, I shall be quite interested to know how the knitting comes on. I have been thinking that you & Mary were just at the right age to make great improvement in character & habits, especially in manners. I expect when I have not seen you for several weeks, that I shall see a manifest improvement. How is it about your promptness in rising in the morning, in setting the table, in promptness about meals &c. I want to hear from you all once in two weeks, till I see you again, when I shall expect that Mary & Edward will have gone almost through the book, & Catherine quite through.

My affectionate regards to your parents. They will be interested to know, that a large number of Miss Caldwell's scholars have become hopefully pious, & that there is now a very interesting revival in the town of Norton.

My letters may be remailed, & directed to this place. In my friendship letters, I like to have one word of 4 letters left off, & I shall set you the example. When I write on business about trunks, &c. I put it on. Please to omit that word in your next.

Your sincere friend,
Mary Lyon.

I have not forgotten dear Jane, though I filled my page with-

out her name. You may give her as large a portion of my love as to any one.

Address: Miss Mary Hitchcock
Care of Rev. Prof. Hitchcock
Amherst
Mass.[18]

On February 10, 1836, the act of incorporation of Mount Holyoke Seminary passed both houses of legislature, to be signed by Horace Mann, president of the Senate, and Edward Everett, governor. On March 2, the trustees met at South Hadley and took steps for obtaining estimates and architect's plans. On the 13th of April they met again. Of this meeting Miss Lyon writes on April 25th:

The late meeting of the trustees at South Hadley was as favorable as could be expected. A committee was appointed to attend to the preparations towards building, and more general responsibility was committed to Mr. Hawks than heretofore. Mr. Joseph Avery, of Conway, was added to the trustees. At an adjourned meeting at Northampton, on the 19th, Deacon Andrew W. Porter, of Monson, was appointed a trustee. We have had our eye on him for some time. He has had more experience in superintending workmen and in putting up buildings than any one on our board. Benevolent, disinterested, and of sound judgement, he is also one of the first of accountants. He is an acquaintance of Mr. Tyler, and at South Hadley Mr. T., with Mr. Hawks and myself, agreed to meet at Monson the next day. When we reached Monson, the gentleman we went to see was absent, not to return till Saturday night, and on this account I did not leave Monson till the following Tuesday. I was much interested in my visit there. Both Mr. P. and his wife can look at our cause.

I have been endeavoring to ascertain whether we can depend on Mr. and Mrs. Safford's firm support, whenever it is desirable to bring our cause up here. The Lord is, I believe, inclining their hearts in our favor.[19]

Mrs. Porter tells the story of that first visit of Miss Lyon's to the

home which was to become for the next dozen years her frequent refuge when the cares of her South Hadley life pressed too heavily upon her. Answering the door bell on a snowy day, she found a stranger lady standing before her who introduced herself as Mary Lyon of Ipswich and remarked that the gentleman with whom she came had driven around to the carriage-house on account of the storm. "I was prepared to give her a cordial reception, having a high regard for Miss Grant and Miss Lyon as principals of Ipswich Seminary; but what could have brought her there, that stormy day, I could not think. Soon the Rev. Mr. Tyler, an acquaintance of ours, came in and introduced her, inquiring if Mr. Porter was at home. I replied, 'He is gone to Boston, but we expect him home in this evening's stage.' Some regret was expressed, but Miss L. immediately remarked, 'Providence orders all things right,' and as soon as outside garments were disposed of, with much animation and no less apparent vigor from exposure to the storm, told me in brief their errand."

With characteristic directness Miss Lyon told the story of their having arrived at a point where they could not proceed much farther till a gentleman was found to superintend the erection of the building. She said: "a gentleman is needed whose business talent has been tested, who has had experience in building, and one in whose integrity the community would have confidence; one, too, who would do it without remuneration, for there are not sufficient funds to devote any to that purpose; and it is all a work of benevolence." Mr. Porter's name had been mentioned the previous evening, and Mr. Hawks and Mr. Tyler had been appointed to wait on him. She had requested that she accompany them. "Now," continued Miss Lyon, "do you know of any thing in his business, health or views, that you would expect would prevent his considering the subject?"

We halt breathless before the challenge of this large request from a stranger, but Mrs. Porter expressed her interest in the cause, though she told Miss Lyon and Mr. Tyler that Mr. Porter had suffered during the year from nervous headache and had decided to take a long journey to the far west as soon as the winter was over to try the effect on his health of relaxation from business and traveling. Mr. Hawks, who had arrived meanwhile, and Mr. Tyler decided that they must depart to keep Sunday preaching appointments, but Mrs. Porter invited Miss Lyon to stay over Sunday. In due time Mr. Porter returned, but, according to the best New England tradition, no further

word was spoken of the matter until after the Sabbath. On Monday the subject was fully discussed, and Miss Lyon went away hopeful. But a letter written by Mrs. Porter to Miss Lyon a fortnight later shows that it took more than a single interview to win Mr. Porter to the cause. We quote its opening paragraph, for it shows Mrs. Porter as desirous that her husband take up this task if possible.

"Monson, May 6th, 1836

"I perceive you considering Husband as one of your Board of Trustees. Mr. Hawks visited us one week after you left and told him of his appointment. He requested him, as you did, not to decide at once that he could not accept & perform the duties desired of him—but to meet with the trustees at their next meeting of which he would advise him. Husband told him he would come or write, which I believe is all the definiteness there was about it. I am sorry to say upon reflection (& I trust prayer) he does not feel any more as though he could take much care or responsibility upon him at present, finding his head considerably affected with business he has had to transact since you were here. If he is a suitable person it would delight my heart much to have him engage in earnest in the enterprize, as I view most important, I see your present emergency—Indeed my feelings are very much enlisted, and Mr. Porter appears deeply interested & willing to do what he can, but that his health & capacity were not sufficient to engage deeply enough in it at present to be of any particular benefit, & to lean at all on him would only be a disadvantage. I regret this extremely. . . .[20]

Later in this long letter Mrs. Porter reiterates her own desire that her husband engage in this important enterprise and "trust the Lord for help." The hospitality shown by Mrs. Porter on that wintry day marked the beginning of a friendship which was to be a great comfort to both ladies. Of the way in which Miss Lyon entered at once into the family interests we may get a glimpse by the concluding comment that her daughter Elizabeth, aged thirteen, "has made bread twice with good success since you were here. She means to be

qualified to be a breadmaker at Mount Holyoke Seminary." * As for Mr. Porter, he came as enthusiastically if a bit more slowly under the spell of the cause. His change from business proved to be a substitution of the entire charge of the Mount Holyoke building program for his own work, with long stays in South Hadley each week to supervise every detail.

In the same letter which tells of this Monson trip, Miss Lyon mentions Deacon and Mrs. Safford as "hopefully inclined" towards the cause. Back of this lies another story, equally important in the annals of the Seminary, for without Mr. Safford's warm interest and generous support the work could hardly have been carried forward. This Boston home over whose threshold she first passed on her educational mission became, as did the Porter home in Monson, her refuge when Seminary perplexities threatened to overwhelm her.

She had heard about Deacon Safford as soon as she started on her task of soliciting gifts. One Boston gentleman after another said to her, "He is just the man to carry forward the work." She used in later years to say of one and another of these early supporters of the project, "God had prepared these hearts." Certainly she could not have known when she approached this well-to-do gentleman how ready both he and his wife were to share her interests.

Mary Lyon's concern was over the middle class of society. To that class Daniel Safford [21] belonged. His money had come to him by his own labor, not by inheritance. He had begun his training as an apprentice in his brother's blacksmith shop in Salem, and come to Boston at the close of that apprenticeship. The circumstances are interesting. In the hard times at the close of the War of 1812 this older brother, David, was not doing particularly well, and there was no future in the shop for young Daniel. Money was so scarce that David bargained with the boy that he could be released from completing his required term of service if he would agree to forego the "freedom suit of cloths" which was the master's obligation at the close of the years of apprenticeship. So Daniel came up to Boston on a stormy Saturday night in December in his old worn clothes, with only the twenty dollars in his pocket which he had managed to lay aside by many hours of outside and extra night work.

* Elizabeth died in May, 1838, and Mrs. Porter comforted herself with taking on Miss Lyon's girls as if they were her own.

He knew only one person in Boston, a Mr. Adams, a former Salem neighbor. The way he found him gives a picture of the simplicity of the Boston of that year. After a night spent at a hotel, young Safford sallied forth to look for his friend and shortly came upon him as they crossed the present Washington Street. Adams was out thus early carrying home for the starting of his morning fire a pan of coals which he had procured at the Lamb Tavern, a famous hostelry located near Boston Common. After breakfast he took Daniel to Park Street church, starting thus the connection with that church and two of its later offshoots, the Salem Street church and Mount Vernon church, which won for him the title by which he came to be most frequently known, that of Deacon Safford. The next morning the two started as partners in Mr. Adams' blacksmithing shop, Daniel investing his twenty dollars and his labor and ideas, to create an iron-working business which grew into one of the leading industries of the city. Within a few years, under Mr. Safford's guidance, it was furnishing iron work for the balustrades and ornamental fences of many of the finer Boston houses as well as filling such larger contracts as those for the fence around the Common and the metal work for the Quincy Market.

When Miss Lyon met Mr. Safford, he had partially retired from this successful business, having decided in 1832, when he had accumulated about $40,000 to stop further acquisition and devote all future earnings and such income as was not needed by his family to charitable objects. With this benevolent purpose his third wife, Mrs. Eliza Ann Safford, whom he married in 1833, was in complete accord.

To her should be ascribed his first inclination to turn his gifts in the channel of girls' education. In the biography of Deacon Safford which Mrs. Safford wrote after his death, she records a visit paid not long after their marriage in the year 1833 to Belchertown, a village only a few miles from the future site of Mount Holyoke Seminary. As they drove in their chaise across the state, he talked of how he was desirous of finding an object to which he could devote not only money but part of the time formerly spent in his business. She suggested that a school for the thorough education of girls on Christian principles, whose privileges might be within the reach of all, was one of the great wants of the age. He responded enthusiastically to the idea. Before they left Belchertown they examined some unoccupied build-

ings on large estates with a view to the possible setting up of such a school, and on his return Deacon Safford paid a visit to his friend Dr. Edwards at Andover in order to talk over the project with him. Dr. Edwards said that Miss Mary Lyon was devoting herself to just such an endeavor. Mr. Safford, having some knowledge of her, decided to wait until he could see her.

Meanwhile Miss Lyon, knowing nothing of this special interest of the Saffords, went in response to an invitation to their home in Montgomery Place. Two accounts remain of this meeting, the one complementing the other. Miss Lyon's is a verbal report by one of her students of the way she used to tell her girls about this momentous evening, those Mount Holyoke girls who knew Deacon Safford as a frequent visitor at the Seminary and its constant patron and friend.

I cannot describe my feelings [Miss Lyon used to say], as I found myself really at his door. Between the ringing of the doorbell and the response, I tried to roll all my care upon the Lord, and to be willing to receive not one encouraging word, if so my God might be most honored. I found, in Mr. and Mrs. Safford, hearts all ready to enter into my plans. God had prepared these hearts.[22]

Mrs. Safford tells it more fully.

"Just at dusk one evening, the rattle of the stagecoach was heard in their quiet court, and her arrival was announced. Mr. Safford, having a slight acquaintance, was the first to receive her, and, with a hearty welcome, introduced her to Mrs. Safford. Her toilet occupied but a moment, as she had merely to exchange her bonnet for that broad white turban which many remember as the distinguishing feature of her dress at this period.

"She was in the vigor of life; time had plowed no furrows on that broad, cheerful face; the large, beaming blue eye, the open forehead, indeed, her whole countenance revealed a mind and heart expressive of lofty sentiments and expanded views of life and its ends. This was the first introduction to the family of one who ever after was like a member of it.

Children, servants, and guests henceforth regarded her as having a right to come, to tarry, and go as she pleased.

"After tea and family devotions, Miss Lyon occupied several hours in explaining the specific object of her visit, and giving the detail of her plans. She had undertaken a great work, which was to be accomplished by faith, but a faith which required much self-denial and toil, on her part and on the part of many others. She had collected the first thousand dollars in small sums, from her friends in Ipswich, for an institution the buildings of which alone would cost sixty thousand dollars. She possessed herself but two thousand dollars, and had no relative or friend upon whom she could found the expectation of assistance; but believing herself called of God to this service, she relied on him implicitly, accompanying every step with fervent prayer for guidance and help." [23]

Miss Lyon's biographers supply the sequel. That first evening, when Miss Lyon had retired, Mr. Safford said to his wife, "How much do you think I had better give to Miss Lyon?" She replied, "I thought perhaps you would give five hundred dollars." He was surprised, but slept on the matter, and the next morning pledged that amount, the first of his many donations for the seminary.

With Deacon Safford and Deacon Porter enlisted for the cause Mount Holyoke prospects brightened. But in the country at large business conditions were already heading towards the panic of 1837, and money raising was becoming increasingly difficult. On May 24, 1836, Miss Lyon writes from Boston to Miss Caldwell at Wheaton:

When I was last in Boston, I thought it best that Mr. Hawks should come here this week, hoping that something might be done for our cause. But the times grow worse and worse, and doing any thing now is entirely out of the question. I know not where I am going to be, nor what I am going to do. "Take no thought for the morrow" comes to me often with force. I seem continually to know less and less about the future.[24]

XXV

THE BEECHER CORRESPONDENCE

JUNE AND JULY, 1836

Miss Lyon's plans did not fail to meet with objections. In her efforts to make female education a cause which would appeal to a benevolent public, she figured on low tuition, which involved also low salaries for teachers. Miss Beecher, as we have seen in her correspondence with Miss Grant, did not approve. Miss Lyon's interest was in what statisticians now call the "middle-income" group. She sought by her low tuition, by her community housekeeping plan, and in every other possible way to realize democratic ideals, feeling that thus she could best introduce the principle of higher education for girls into the largest number of homes. The two educators discussed it in friendly fashion in interviews, and fortunately for us also by correspondence in this spring of 1836. We have come to know Miss Lyon's background, out of which she had evolved her plan. But we must take a moment to sketch Miss Beecher's, which is interesting also in showing one more attempt at girls' education in these early decades.

Catharine Beecher [1] had met in her own experience the difficulties which drove Miss Grant and Miss Lyon to campaign for permanent endowment. Personal reasons had led her into teaching. Feeling herself widowed in 1822 by the death by shipwreck of her brilliant fiancé, Alexander Metcalf Fisher, she turned the following year at the age of twenty-three to teaching. "Generally speaking," she wrote her father at the time, "there seems to be no very extensive field of usefulness for a single woman but that which can be found in the limits of a school-room."[2] Her brother Edward was conducting a school for boys in Hartford, Connecticut, and friends suggested the need of a good female academy for girls in that city. Her father went promptly about investigating the matter with the result that within a couple of months of her first mention of the matter in family letters, there appeared in the Hartford papers of April, 1823, a modest announcement of a school to be conducted by the Misses C. and M. Beecher. (Her sister Mary was joining her in the undertaking.) This school was to hold

its sessions in rooms over a harness store on Main Street, one of the inducements of this central location being that "one could leave Hartford at 3 A.M. on Mon., Wed., and Friday and reach Boston in 17 hours," or go to New Haven on the alternate days.

Hartford Female Seminary began with fifteen pupils and was forced by increase in numbers to move twice in three years, the second time to the basement of a church, which was the only place large enough to accommodate its seventy or eighty students. By that time it was obvious that something must be done about a building. A stock company was formed, and the spring of 1827 saw the sum of $4850 raised by the subscriptions of fifty-two persons who took ninety-seven shares at $50 each. But even the resulting building did not suffice to end the financial problem, and during the next three years Miss Beecher was always busy with her pen memorializing the public for endowment. But the $20,000 she sought never came. As we appraise Miss Lyon's contribution to higher education, we come to realize how she alone of these women carried her plan through to financial success. Nor was it only financial success which she sought. She was building on deep foundations of public interest and approval, with the example of educational establishments for boys and young men as her parallel.

Miss Beecher left Hartford in 1831, turning over her school to others. She had broken down with overwork and was accompanying her father to Cincinnati. There she took on the cause of education in the West, which we shall shortly see her furthering with all her energy.

It was out of this experience that she wrote to Miss Lyon in June, 1836, in response to the circular announcing the new school.

Boston Friday Evening

"My dear Friend—

"I have just this moment rec'd yours and hasten to return you a reply. I expect to remain in Boston and vicinity till my father arrives & we are every moment expecting him. I shall probably remain thro' the greater part of next week if he comes this week—if he does not come so soon I shall remain longer. I think you had better come immediately as it may be of much use to you to see him as well as me.

"I cannot leave Boston until he arrives, and therefore as it is all uncertain when that will be, I cannot come to meet you. One thing, I must caution you about; I am very excitable just at present and cannot talk very long myself, nor bear to be talked to in a very animated way, especially on the topic where you and I feel so much. There are some conspiring causes that have produced a temporary excitability that will soon pass away I trust. I want you to come therefore prepared to be as calm as a clock when you talk to me, and not expect that I can talk long at a time. I can listen much better than I can talk provided you will not be too interesting.

"Before you come I wish you would make memorandum in writing of certain points of difficulty in regard to your plan. I will suggest these points:

"1. It is the great object of great plans, to raise the profits of our profession, until men of talents can find it a profession they can enter with a fair prospect of as good a support as the other professions yield and till they can also afford to pay for a proper number of qualified assistants. If this is not secured, the profession will be as it has been, the resort of the dull stupid and shiftless that can do nothing else, while as a general fact it will be forsaken by energy and talents.

"The profession cannot be sustained by a missionary spirit—that spirit will send men forth as ministers and missionaries, but rarely as teachers. Therefore all plans that tend to sink the price of tuition will probably be discountenanced by the most liberal and expanded minds that are engaged in this enterprise. It is on this place that I fear you are starting wrong. Now I wish you to draw up in writing all objections to these modifications of your plan.

1. Setting up a high price of tuition, with the understanding that all whose circumstances demand aid shall be assisted either by giving them a part or the whole of the tuition.

2. Setting a medium price for tuition, and having those who are able, pay rent for their rooms, and others be allowed to use them rent free.

"There are the modes I have thought of—but am not confident that others may not be better that would secure the same effect, viz., to have those who are able, pay what should be the tuition that would support competent teachers and enough of them in the female schools that require such opportunities as your plan proposes. Meantime I will write down all the objections to your present plan and then we shall be ready to start fair.

Catharine Beecher"[3]

Whether the two women had their intended interview at this time, with Miss Lyon endeavoring for the sake of Miss Beecher's nerves to be "calm as a clock" and "not too interesting," we do not know. That Miss Lyon had been in touch all along with Dr. Lyman Beecher is shown by the inclusion of his name on an early circular of the proposed seminary as one of fifteen gentlemen sponsoring the project.[4]

Miss Lyon's reply to the above letter is one of her ablest expositions of her ideas concerning women and education, concluding with a word about the relation of the sexes.

To Miss Catharine Beecher

July 1, 1836

I thank you for your interest in my plans, expressed in the sincere way of criticism on one point. I think, however, you do not fully understand them.

The terms high, low, and moderate tuition mean very different things in different parts of the country. In the aristocratic south, where all the wealth is concentrated on large plantations, and in some of the speculating portions of the north, where wealth flows in as in a day, and in some of the most prosperous mercantile and manufacturing places, these terms are understood differently from what they are among the general community of New England. The latter, tilling a sterile soil, and uniting economy with prudence, are enabled, by the slow gains of patient industry, to provide comfortably for their children, and send them to school in their own neighborhoods, to sustain the ordinances of the gospel, and to reserve something to be cast into the treasury of the

Lord, in order to send the gospel to the heathen, to raise up ministers, to build up colleges and seminaries at the west, and to supply the destitute of our own land . . . with the sacred ministry.

Our plan is to place tuition at what will be regarded by the New England community, including the wealthy and the educated, with farmers and mechanics, as moderate tuition.

Here I would have you distinctly understand that we do not adopt this standard because we consider ourselves under any obligation to *man* so to do. Neither do we consider it necessary that other institutions should adopt the same standard, or that this institution should certainly abide by it evermore, though at present it is essential to our success.

I have not been alone in considering it of great importance to establish a permanent seminary in New England for educating female teachers, with accommodations, apparatus, &c., somewhat like those for the other sex. Honorably to do this, from twenty to forty thousand dollars must be raised; and such a sum, raised for such an object, would form almost an era in female education. For years, Miss Grant and myself made continual efforts to accomplish the object; but all our efforts failed.

I am convinced that there are but two ways to accomplish such an object. First, to interest one, two, or a few wealthy men to do the whole; second, to interest the whole New England community, beginning with the country population, and in time receiving the aid and cooperation of the more wealthy in our cities. Each of these modes, if practicable, would have its advantages. The first, if done at all, could be done sooner and with very little comparative labor. The second would require vastly more time and labor; but if it were accomplished, an important and salutary impression would be made on the whole of New England. Having adopted this second course, we have been for some time going forward with as much success as we could expect. We have enlisted for the work. I have regarded it as a work for life. In laying our plans, we examined carefully every step. In the commencement of any great enterprise, the community often are not prepared to act upon the most important considerations,

when they can be moved by less important, but more tangible, circumstances. During my long but fruitless efforts in connection with Miss Grant, I became convinced that the community were not disposed to appreciate the most important advantages of an institution thus endowed, such as its superior character and its permanency. I was also convinced that, to give the first impulse to this work, something must be presented which is more tangible, and of real, though of less, value, and be made to stand out in bold relief. For this purpose, we have chosen the reduction of expenses, as compared with other large seminaries, not aided by the public. Every step we take proves it a good selection. We carefully avoid all extravagant statements; indeed, we usually state only general facts, leaving each to make his own estimate and draw his own conclusions. There is an expectation that economy will be practiced in the establishment, and that the funds, gathered by little and little, will be reserved for the good of the institution, and not for private emolument, and that there will be such a reduction of expense as the nature of the case will allow. Here is our pledge, and we must redeem it. In doing this, the first object to be gained is good management in the boarding department. Let that be secured, and all else will be sure to follow. I do not expect to have the direct care of the boarding department, but I hope to secure the co-operation of persons skilled in domestic economy, and disposed to use their skill faithfully for the great cause. The department of instruction, including tuition, I expect to superintend myself; and it is essential to success in the boarding department that I should set an example of economy in my own. Unless I do, I cannot lift up my head in efforts to exert an influence on this point in every other department. I do not mean to ask any other one connected with the institution to make such sacrifices as I can cheerfully make.* This may not be necessary for my successor, but it is necessary in my case, at least for a few years.

* Miss Lyon, says Dr. Hitchcock, "fixed her own salary at two hundred dollars, with board, fuel, and lights; and when subsequently the trustees urged her to take more, she always refused."

Again, we have held up to New England people the advantages of a teachers' seminary, with ample facilities for boarding and instruction, free of rent, of so superior a character that a supply of scholars could be secured without receiving those who were immature and ill prepared, and who are always a heavy tax on the time of teachers. We have shown that the same money will, in this way, do more to provide instruction for young women qualifying themselves to teach, than it would do in our country academies. After these professions, shall we ask for higher tuition, at the same time that we are asking for benevolent aid to carry forward our enterprise?

Thus I do feel confident that we must retain our plan for tuition, or abandon the enterprise. But we must not give up the work. To indulge even a fear as to our final success, would be a cruel distrust of the kindest Providence. While I do not consider ourselves under any obligation to *man*, we are under solemn obligations to *God*, to adopt this course. We are compelled by the principles of expediency, so beautifully exhibited in the precepts and practice of the apostle Paul. If any injury should result to the cause of education from our adopting this moderate standard of tuition, it will be as nothing compared with the great good to be accomplished; less far than the injurious results of Paul's example, on the support of the gospel ministry, which results he so carefully guards against in the ninth chapter of 1 Corinthians.

I express myself with more confidence on this subject, because it has been with me, for two or three years, a matter of careful consideration; but further, because our laborious and indefatigable agent [Mr. Hawks] is of the same opinion, and all his intercourse with New England people has tended to confirm it. Having been wholly devoted to the enterprise for a year and a half, he probably knows more of the views of the New England community on this point than any hundred others. Careful in all his movements, he never has occasion to retrace a single step. Whatever may be thought of my sanguine temperament, he cannot be charged with being over-zealous. But his deficiency in zeal is more than made up by his unwearied labors, his never-ending

patience and perseverance, his sound common sense, his careful observation of human nature, and his intimate acquaintance with New England people. You speak of the importance of raising the compensation of teachers. In a list of motives for teaching, I should place first the great motive, which cannot be understood by the natural heart, Love thy neighbor as thyself. On this list, though not second in rank, I have been accustomed to place pecuniary considerations. I am inclined to the opinion that this should fall lower on a list of motives to be presented to ladies than to gentlemen, and that this is more in accordance with the system of the divine government. Let us cheerfully make all due concessions, where God has designed a difference in the situation of the sexes, such as woman's retiring from public stations, being generally dependent on the other sex for pecuniary support, &c. O that we may plead constantly for her religious privileges, for equal facilities for the improvement of her talents, and for the privilege of using all her talents in doing good! [5]

So ended the friendly argument between these two educators as it was conducted on paper. An amusing comment on the power of each woman in verbal defense of their views comes many years later from President Julian Sturtevant of Illinois College, who knew them both. He speaks of the fault which, according to his thinking, the two women, for both of whom he had the highest respect, shared. "This common fault was that in the earnestness with which they would pursue an argument when the conversation had become spirited and controversial, they led me to forget that I was conversing with a woman, and tempted me to forget the courtesy ever due to the sex."

XXVI

THE CORNER STONE LAID

October 3, 1836

During the long months when Mary Lyon was trying to prod her committee into action, she would doubtless have said that anything was preferable to this cautious delay. But when these ministerial and other gentlemen began to act, she was due to be as much tried of soul, though for other reasons.

The site for the building was selected at a meeting of the trustees held in South Hadley on May 19, 1836. On July 7 she writes from that place to Miss Grant:

Mr. Tyler has never been satisfied with the site selected. Mr. Bowdoin, who was not at the meeting when the question was decided, also dislikes the selection. Mr. Hawks and myself like it more than we dislike it. To-day we have been to the spot, measured the ground, taken the relative elevation, and discussed the subject abundantly. I am not very partial to the spot, but I dread to have the subject again agitated.[1]

On July 18 she writes again, this time from Norton, where, we note, the new house, that boarding-house for students which Miss Lyon was said to have "fairly talked into being," was being built.

Norton, July 18, 1836

My dear Miss Grant,

What a hasty visit I did have at Ipswich two weeks ago. I do not feel scarcely as if I had seen you. But it is all just as well perhaps. Thus we pass along through this world, & all these scenes will soon be over. Our personal comforts as we go along are delightful, but not essential. The great thing is, to lay up for ourselves a treasure beyond this world, & to do while sojourning here all that the Lord would have us do. Sometimes I fear that I

have so much of worldly expectation of comfort here, that it may be necessary to dash these hopes, by disappointing me in my plans of doing good. I do not know, that I uniformly expect much in this world, but ere I am aware, I find myself indulging the prospect that the present trying circumstances will be over, that in time I shall be settled down again in a pleasant field for doing good, where I shall not be constantly changing with no resting place, & constantly meeting with one obstacle after another. I always fear when I find my heart thus clinging to the hope of future good. Perhaps these are my best days this side the grave.

Another dark cloud seems now to be gathering over our prospects—perhaps one of the darkest that has ever hung over our enterprize & yet I can scarcely tell why it should be so. Tues. night after I left you I spent at Belchertown, & Wed. Mr. Hawks & myself went to Mr. Tyler's, to talk over the subject with him & Mr. Bowdoin about building. These three gentlemen compose all the building committee, except Mr. Williston, who is absent on a long journey, & Mr. Avery. By the way, Mr. Tyler voted at the time against the site selected, & has always disliked it, but we hoped would not make very much of it. This he told me in Boston. He dislikes the appearance of the site, & thinks it is an inconvenient place to build. We found that his dislike had grown stronger, & was much increased when he found Mr. Bowdoin, who did not attend the trustee meeting when it was decided, was not in favor of it. This occupied a large part of the day. Thurs. was spent at South Hadley, recovering the ground, discussing the subject etc. etc. Mr. Hawks & myself were so much against having the question again agitated, that they gave up the point, & it was decided to go forward in making preparations for building. Thurs. evening Mr. Hawks & myself rode down to Springfield to consult an architect, & returned to Mr. Tyler's. I spent Friday there & the subject kept continually coming up, & I found Mr. Tyler would always be dissatisfied. I saw Mr. Bowdoin in the evening, & found his dislike to the place greater than I supposed. Saturday Mr. Hawks came, & it was then decided to have a regular meeting of the building committee on

Tues. & on Tues. it was judged expedient to have a meeting of the Trustees. This will take place on Thurs. of next week. And so I have come here, to see how the new house comes on, though I must go away again so soon. . . .

Affectionately yours,
Mary Lyon.[2]

The objection to the selected site, and even to the final location of the building, was, as Dr. Hitchcock explains, that the ground opposite the buildings was higher than their base, so that it was only from the upper windows that the fine view across the valley towards the Mount Tom range of mountains could be gained.[3]

However, the last week in July the trustees held their meeting, and "confirmed the doings of their last meeting respecting the site," that is, left it as it was before these objections had been made. But that was not the end of the matter. On September 6 Miss Lyon writes;

After the excavations for the cellar and basement story were nearly completed, an apparent defect was discovered in the foundation, and we had great fears that the question of site would be again agitated. The foundation was examined by a gentleman well acquainted with such things, and it was decided to be safe, but better to go back a little. It was removed back twenty-five feet farther from the road. I wish it could have gone much farther back, but this was some thing I could not control. It is sixty feet from the road, which is very wide, and makes the distance more tolerable. But the same man who decided on the foundation raised a doubt about the bricks which had been purchased, and there was great fear that all must be rejected, and no more could be obtained till they were made next summer. Several days more of suspense succeeded, when the bricks were examined by a superior judge, and pronounced not bad, pretty good.[4]

That this was the end of these particular difficulties is shown by the next letter (probably one of many) giving an invitation to the laying of the corner stone, appointed for October 3rd.

South Hadley, Sept. 21, 1836.

Mr. Heard,

Sir,

You will be interested to learn the progress of Mount Holyoke Female Seminary. Soon after the act of Incorporation was obtained,[5] the Trustees met & organized, & have since been carrying forward the enterprize. They are now laying the foundation of the first edifice. The corner stone is to be laid on Monday Oct. 3, at two oclock P.M. with appropriate religious exercises. Mr. Todd will give the address. The presence of the early friends of the enterprize will be pleasant to all. We especially hope, that the members of the original Committee will generally be able to be present on that very interesting occasion. I have therefore been requested to write to you, mentioning the appointment with a hope that you may be able to be here.

Cannot you come & Mrs. Heard with you. How very pleasant it would be. Besides an excursion into this part of the state would be pleasant. If you can come, I wish you would just drop me a line directed to this place, stating when you will be here.

Respectfully yours,
Mary Lyon.[6]

Geo. W. Heard Esq.
Boston
No. 47 Pinckney Street

A few days later Miss Lyon writes to Miss Grant the oft-quoted "era in female education" letter. The memoir presents it shorn of all personal touches, with the important paragraph standing out alone. But a reading of the complete letter gives us a more human and less austere Mary Lyon who discusses clothes—her black silk dress, her cloak, and a pelisse—before she turns to "female education."

South Hadley, Sat.
evening Oct. 9, 1836.

My dear Miss Grant,

I am thinking of going to Boston about a week from this time, & perhaps shall go to Ipswich, if you are there. I should be glad

to hear from you, & learn something about your plans. I do not wish you to stay at Ipswich on my account, but I should be glad to know when you will be there. I believe I must have a little mantua making done. I am hesitating whether to make an attempt to have it done in Boston, or at Ipswich or Norton. My black silk dress I had made at Monson. My cloak has had such very hard usage last year, that on examinging (*sic*) it, I believe I must have something else for this winter. I am hesitating whether to have a good cloak, or to have something for a pelisse, which I can make into a dress at some future time, perhaps dark silk, perhaps some kind of woollen, merino, or something else. I could have it lined very warm, & carry it in my trunk on my journeys, & sometimes journey without it. My cloak will do for journeying, & for most occasions, but sometimes, I must have something a little better. What do you think would be most comfortable, & most economical? I should very much like to know what is your opinion. I shall purchase it in Boston probably. Can you ascertain whether there is any thing in Ipswich, you would think suitable? Can you also ascertain whether I could have it made at Ipswich next week. I have not entirely given up going to New York this autumn. I am thinking of going directly to New York from Boston. But it is almost impossible for me to predict my own movements. I spent last Wed. night at Belchertown, Thurs. night at Barre, Friday night at Amherst, & yesterday returned here. I leave tomorrow on an excursion around on the hills for the sake of conversing with some individual about our enterprize. I expect to get round to Belchertown the last of the week, on my way to Boston. If you can mail your reply as early as Friday, direct to Belchertown. If later direct to Boston care of Dea. Safford, No. 3, Beacon Street. I am going to Boston to endeavor to find out whether it is safe for us to attempt anything there this autumn. If it seems expedient, I shall write to Mr. Hawks, & he will go on & make the attempt. I wish you could render us some aid. There is more than 9 chances out of 10, that the question will be decided in the negative. May the path of duty be made plain. Pray for us. Have you any hints to give on this

subject? Perhaps I shall go to Ipswich with very little stop in Boston, & stop more on my return. I went to Barre with Mr. Hawks. Rev. Mr. Stone has finally decided to accept of an agency for our seminary. He commences immediately. We had a fine day for the laying of the corner stone. I should have enjoyed your being present. The address is generally well spoken of. The general doctrine of benevolence was pretty well discussed. I should have been glad of something a little more specific. Dr. Humphrey made the first prayer, & Mr. Condit the last. It was a day of very deep interest. The associations were very tender. That is an affecting spot to me. The stone & brick & mortar speak a language, which vibrates through my very soul. How much thought, & how much feeling have I had on this general subject in years that are past. And I have indeed lived to see the time, when a body of gentlemen have ventured to lay the corner stone of an edifice which will cost about $15,000,—& for an institution for females. Surely the Lord hath remembered our low estate. This will be an era in female education. The work will not stop with this institution. This enterprize may have to struggle through embarrassments for years, but its influence will be felt. It is a concession on the part of gentlemen in our behalf which can be used again & again.

I have not seen you since the first of July. I do want to see you very much. Can we settle our pecuniary affairs while I am at Ipswich. I do very much want to know how they stand.

Affectionately yours,
Mary Lyon.[7]

Miss Z. P. Grant
Ipswich
Mass.
Via Boston

XXVII

THE MEETING IN DEACON SAFFORD'S PARLOR

March 10, 1837

"The times grow worse and worse," Miss Lyon had written Miss Caldwell in May, 1836, explaining the postponement of an intended effort by Mr. Hawks and herself to raise money in and about Boston. By March of the following year they were still worse, but the effort could be postponed no longer.

With building begun there was constant pressure for money to meet the bills which were weekly being incurred. Miss Lyon felt the pinch and began to draw for their payment on her own slender funds. Two letters, selected from several, indicate the stress.

Granby, Nov. 16, 1836.

My dear Miss Grant,

I should be exceedingly glad of that $80, which is my due, if you can conveniently let me have it. I will just tell you the case. The building committee had a meeting a few days since to look over their funds, which are immediately available. They have a large amount of money to make out this month, & it is besides of the utmost importance that they purchase the lumber immediately. I urged this very much. They are to have a meeting again a week from next Monday. The truth is it is very slow getting the money here which is now due, & I have some fear, that Dea. Porter, who says he can generally find money to hire but that he cannot now, & who by the way is the only man who can bear any part of this burden in this part the business, that will lift a little finger, I fear that when Dea. Porter finds how things stand & how many of the subscriptions have not come in, that he will be discouraged, and feel that his associates put all on him.

After lengthy directions for sending the money, she continues:

I want to give you a history of what I am trying to do. I am here & under the wing of a very efficient lady, am looking up & collecting the subscriptions which have been due here so long, that they are almost considered as outlawed. I shall write again soon & tell you some of the ludicrous things which I am trying to do. You may write & direct to Northampton till you hear from me again.

Affectionately yours,
Mary Lyon.[1]

In a letter of the same month to Mr. Heard urging his attention to a subscription by a lady of his acquaintance, she continues on the same line.

When the trustees decided to commence building, the available funds were in somewhat of a doubtful state, but the necessity of the case was so great, that they decided to venture. It was necessary that they should make contracts to a considerable amount, to be paid during the present month. These must very soon be met, & the trustees consider it absolutely essential to expend several hundred dollars more immediately in purchasing lumber, before the river freezes. The building committee have just had a meeting to investigate the state of funds. In some respects they are not so favorable as might have been anticipated. The subscriptions have increased more rapidly during the last three months than ever before, but owing to the peculiar pressure on the money market, the time of payment is generally put sometime forward. For the same reason, money on the past subscriptions does not come in as promptly as might have been expected. These & some other circumstances have placed the institution just now in a very trying state. A great burden is brought on the trustees, & we are compelled to intreat the friends of the cause to aid in bearing the burden.[2]

Was the country-wide panic of 1837 going to halt this project at this critical time? That was the question the trustees must have been asking themselves. Deacon Safford's answer was to invite a group of

gentlemen to his home at 3 Beacon Street, Boston. From a letter written by Miss Lyon to Miss Grant on March 17 we quote:

Boston, Sabbath evening.

My very dear Friend,

I want to have you know a little about our affairs here, though I will not tax your strength with such a detail as I would if you were well. Thurs. evening we had a very interesting little meeting, though it was so rainy. The gentlemen thought there would be no impropriety in their admitting three ladies to hear what was said on the subject—Mrs. Safford, Miss Caldwell & myself. Dea. Safford wanted that we should be present, & asked the opinion of several gentlemen, who thought it would be proper, & approved of it. Dr. Cogswell, Dr. Anderson, Rev. Messrs. Blagden, Winslow, Rogers, & Boies, & some 15 or 20 others were present. Mr. Anderson read a part of your letter. I had not seen him before after he had received it. At the close of the meeting a subscription was taken up of a little more than $3,000, which has since been increased to $4,000. The largest subscriptions are $1000 from Dea. Safford—two of $500 each, one of them from Dea. Porter, the other from Mr. Doggett—four of $250 each—Mr. Charles Stoddard's, Mr. Henry Edwards's, Dr. N. C. Keep's, & Dr. Solomon Keep's. . . .

Affectionately yours,
Mary Lyon.[3]

XXVIII

TOWARDS THE GREAT DAY

April to November, 1837

The ensuing months, following the Safford parlor meeting, show Miss Lyon carrying on many parallel lines of endeavor, all converging towards the chosen date for the opening of the Seminary, November 8. While the building took form and the trustees worked on money problems, she took upon herself the obtaining of furniture and equipment. Here she turned once more to the ladies. Such details as beds and bedding, crockery and kitchen utensils belonged in their sphere. So while she and Deacon Porter were looking after the slating of the roof, she and his good wife, Hannah Porter, were corresponding about knives and forks and bedquilts.

During the spring months Miss Lyon wrote, by her own account, more than one hundred personal letters making the appeal for furnishings. She also prepared and distributed widely a circular carrying the same appeal, which served also as an announcement of the intended opening of the school in the following autumn.[1]

"The first edifice," she says, "is now erecting. It is to be 94 feet by 50, and of four stories, besides the basement." The school is to be only for an older class of young ladies. Every scholar is to board in the establishment. It is to be an institution of the highest opportunities for improvement, and of very moderate expense. The general course of study is to be like that at Ipswich. It is to be permanent, "continuing onward in its operations from generation to generation." A considerable sum has already been subscribed by some hundreds of individuals in more than sixty different towns. "How unlike the principle so long acted upon, that Christians are not required to contribute for the building up of any female seminary, unless it be established in their own town."

Here occurs the widely quoted personal statement: "Had I a thousand lives, I could sacrifice them all in suffering and hardship for its sake. Did I possess the greatest fortune, I could readily relin-

quish it all, and become poor, and more than poor, if its prosperity should demand it." Then, after she has covered in noble paragraphs the relation of female education to the church, the State, and the salvation of the world, she tells her readers what they should do about the cause now. "But the question of furnishing a chamber," she writes, "is one to which a direct reply is particularly requested. It is important that the reply should be DECISIVE, and as early as convenient, so that, in case the answer should be negative (which, however, I do not expect), a substitute may be found."

A copy of this circular sent to Mrs. James Nutman of Elizabethtown, New Jersey, in April, has almost a complete letter written in its blank spaces and around its margins. These notes go into detail about the requirements:

"In furnishing the chambers, it is recommended that the whole amount be given in money, except the clothing for the bed, & the towels, the value of which may be deducted from the specified sum. In making out the estimate, nothing is allowed for bedding but plain durable articles, good judgment will teach what we mean by this, & also what amount of bedding is needed in our coldest New England weather. When I have been asked for directions on this subject, however, I have said with regard to quantity, two pairs of sheets & pillow cases, four towels, pair of blankets, comforter & bedquilt—& with regard to quality, common cotton (unbleached and whitened) for sheets, a little finer for pillow cases, colored cotton, or cheap calico for comforter, durable colors for bedquilt, common cotton either white or colored for lining, any kind of blankets, a little worn, if more convenient, as in that case, some lady may give a pair of blankets, or two ladies, each a blanket. This is designed only as a general guide, it is desirable, that ladies should consult their own taste & judgment, except that it would not be well, to diminish the amount to be given in money by extra expense, incurred in the bedding, lest there should not be enough to procure all the other necessary articles. The whole amount may be given in money, if it is preferred, & the bedding can be furnished here. . . . " [2]

These appeals were not so successful as Miss Lyon had hoped and expected. At the end of May she is writing to a teacher at Ipswich, "We are in a very great strait about furniture." In late June she writes to her niece Abigail Moore, Electa's daughter, who is teaching in Charlottesville, Virginia, and planning to come in the fall as

student and pupil teacher in the new seminary, and states the case as of that date.

I am exceedingly anxious about the furniture for our institution at South Hadley! The trustees will be under the necessity of hiring considerable money, to finish the building. But they have decided to do it, but they will not feel authorized to go any farther. The furniture I have hoped could be furnished by ladies. I have been making efforts to effect this, but the trying times render it exceedingly difficult. I suppose we have not yet pledged from ladies so much as one third the necessary amount. If you should fall in with any good lady, who could become so interested, as to be induced to give us a donation towards this object, I hope you will not fail to make the effort. Everything that is done for us now seems like giving bread to the hungry, & cold water to the thirsty. Let us pray, that the hearts of the people may be opened, & that what is needed may be furnished. Our hope is in the Lord. Sometimes it seems as if my heart would sink under the weight that rests upon me. How all can be done that must be done before the first of Nov. I know not. But in view of what the Lord has done for us in times past, I feel that we have abundant reason to trust him for the future.

Affectionately yours,
Mary Lyon.[3]

As the summer goes on, acceptance of later applicants becomes conditional on the furnishing of empty rooms. To a mother in Norfolk, Connecticut, Miss Lyon writes:

Though we have a place reserved for your daughters, we shall be under the necessity of refusing others, equally impatient & whose cases are urgent and pressing. This is more painful, as we do not expect to receive as many the first term as our building will accommodate for want of means to procure the furniture. Cannot you interest the ladies in Norfolk to make an extraordinary effort to furnish one of these chambers, which must otherwise remain unoccupied? [4]

By September the list is amended to include the bringing by each pupil of two silver teaspoons; and the suggestion is even made that various articles might be borrowed for a few months' use. Miss Lyon is getting worried. To a prospective student she writes: "Some of the bedding which I hoped we should receive has not yet arrived. I begin to fear that we shall not have enough to keep us warm."[5] But there are the good things to rejoice over, too. From Wheaton Seminary had come in the previous winter $130 for the furnishing of a parlor. Mrs. Porter reports $50 in hand and sends Miss Lyon to look up knives and forks and see crockery in Boston stores.

Miss Lyon spent much of that summer in the village, staying in the home of Rev. and Mrs. Condit, the South Hadley minister and his wife, both due to be her special friends and supporters in future seminary years. When she was in the village she was busy overseeing workmen, but a calendar of letters from Enfield, Ipswich, Norton, Northampton, and other places confirms the testimony of her friends as to her much journeying. On September 6, she writes from South Hadley to her mother:

I want you should let me hear from you often. Letters sent to this place will find me very soon; indeed, I must be here now most of the time. I have so much letter writing to do, that I seem not to have time for much else. And yet I have five times as much as I can do which I wish to do. But I must do what I can and let the rest go undone. There is scarcely a mail that does not bring me a letter; yesterday's brought five. Most of them require an answer, and many of them will require two or three before I get through with them. Among all these letters, I should now and then like to receive one from my own dear mother. As for myself, my head is filled with such a variety, that I can write nothing except it is on business. Our building is going on finely. The seal to every thing about it must soon be fixed. My head is full of closets, sheleves, cupboards, doors, sinks, tables, &c. You will think this is new work for me, and indeed, it is.[6]

The next letter, written September 14 to Miss Grant, and dealing chiefly with money matters between them, contains the oft-repeated "precipice" sentence.

I should like to tell you many things about my affairs. When I look through to Nov. 8 it seems like looking down a precipice of many hundred feet, which I must descend. I can only avoid looking to the bottom, & fix my eye on the nearest stone till I have safely reached it. I try to take the least possible care of my health. I have had more real sick days with head ache etc. the last few weeks than usual, but on the whole I am very much sustained by a kind Providence.[7]

A letter written a week later to Mr. Choate, one of the original committee for the seminary, carries on the story. Begun in South Hadley and mailed five days later from Boston, it shows Miss Lyon's crowded program of days and duties.

South Hadley, Sept. 21, 1837.

Mr. Choate,

Dear Sir,

I have just received yours of Sept. 16. I am glad of an inducemement (*sic*) to write to you, that you may just hear from us, I have long been wanting to write, & state some of our present circumstances, but I need not tell you, that an abundance of letters to be answered relative to furniture, applicants, &c. & many other nameless duties, have compelled to avoid doing any thing *now* which can be deferred.

The building is going forward. I cannot tell you much about the state of funds now. With all others we suffer much by the state of funds now. With all others we suffer much by the peculiar times, both in raising funds & in collecting, to say nothing of some entire losses by failures. Dea. Porter devotes much time & attention to our concern. With great effort we expect to commence Nov. 8, but it will require the greatest possible effort. Some parts of the paint will be so fresh that we must use it with the greatest care, & some of the fixtures will not be done. If we can get the carpenters, masons, & painters all out of the building into the wood-house I shall be glad. To save our building from injury, to put it into a more pleasant aspect for our friends,

the dedication will be deferred till sometime after the commencement of school. For the same reason we think it best to have no public exercises at the opening. I hope you will not fail to be here at the dedication, & I shall delight to walk over the building with you in its present state.

I have felt very anxious to raise the means for furniture independent of the funds. I have been trying to do what I could among my circle of friends, & could I have 6 months more to visit many of my friends I think we should have done much towards completing it, or had it been a usual time, we could have done it by correspondence. After I gave up the hope of doing any thing by letters, having written almost a hundred, & mostly in vain, & when I began as far as my efforts were concerned to depend on my visits, I met with some success. Considering the short time, which I devoted, & the peculiar times, our success has been good. But a few weeks since, I saw plainly that I must relinquish any further efforts on this subject except what I could do by letters, or I should sink under the weight of cares, & many other things must be left undone. I concluded that we must prepare to take as many as we could, & refuse the rest. Several of our chambers must remain unoccupied for the present for the want of furniture. I do not know exactly how many we can receive. We have had more than a hundred regular applications. About 50 of them I have ventured to engage to receive, some I have refused, & others I am keeping in suspense, hoping that a kind Providence will open some door which will enable us to receive some of the most urgent. With this statement, you will see that I am compelled to say that I dare not engage to receive even Miss Low. If the good ladies in Essex could look on our urgent wants just as they are, I am inclined to think that even at this late hour, they would make an effort to furnish one of those empty chambers. If they could not succeed in making out the whole, I am inclined to think that the gentlemen would aid them in doing it. I must go to Boston very soon on business. Perhaps I shall just go to Ipswich. If so, I shall very much want to just ride across to Essex, & talk with you one hour. My time is

very limited. It does not seem possible to do what must be done before Nov.

Respectfully yours,
Mary Lyon.

Boston, Sept. 26. After writing this I decided to come here so soon that I brought it with me. My time is so presssed that I shall not be able even to go to Ipswich.

M. L.[8]

David Choate Esq.
Essex
Mass

The two remaining letters dated before the opening day are invitations to prospective students whom Miss Lyon knew well to come early and help in the preparations. The one to Nancy Everett of Wrentham, Massachusetts (in the neighborhood of Essex and Ipswich) is the more specific.

September 30, 1837.

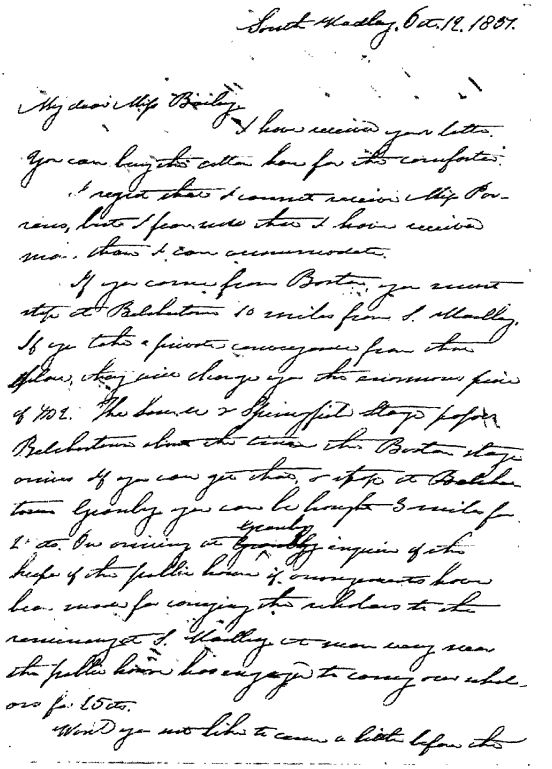
I suppose you are putting things in readiness to come on here before the time, & give us some benevolent work. Can you have two whole weeks of benevolent time to give us? If so, I should be glad to have you come the first of the week, three weeks from the commencement of the term—that is, a little more than two weeks from this. The first part of the time, I want you should devote to benevolent sewing, & the latter part to putting house in order. We cannot be ready to begin as early as three weeks before the commencement of the term, to begin to keep house. But I fear to delay on the sewing that must be done till that time, lest we should be so pressed, that we could not get along. I think it best therefore to have two or three benevolent ladies come on a little before the time; & be at work on the sewing. I must of course provide board for them till we can begin to keep house. This I shall do at my own expense. . . .

Details follow about her arrangements to have these helpers boarded with the family of Reverend Mr. Hawks in Belchertown, ten miles

away. The letter closes with a postscript repeating, as in every letter of this period, the need for spoons.

We have not any spoons given as yet except four table spoons. If you can borrow any in behalf of the institution, & bring with you, I should consider it a great favor. You must become responsible for their careful usage & safe return.[9]

The letter to Miss Bailey follows in facsimile.



South Hadley. Oct. 12. 1837.

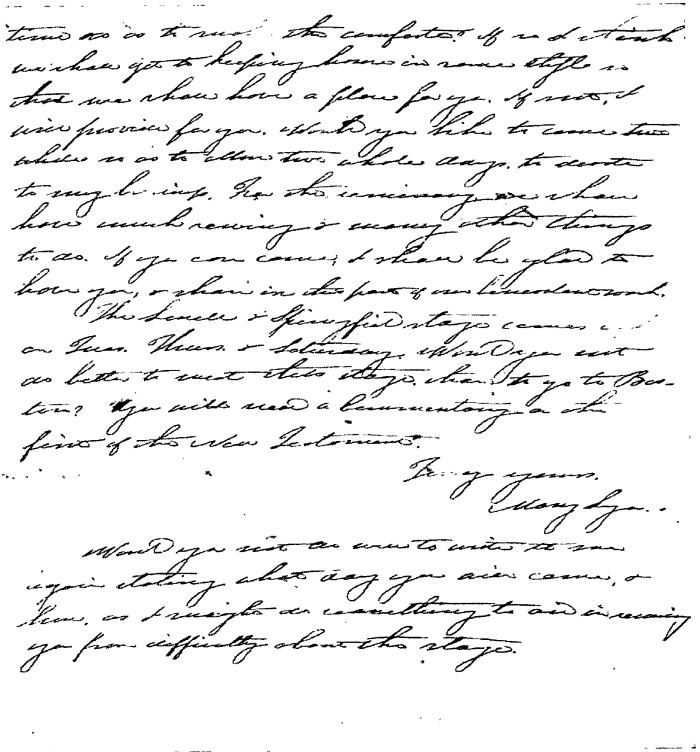
My dear Miss Bailey

I have received your letter. You can buy the cotton here for the comforter. I regret that I cannot receive Miss Porter, but I fear she has heard more than I can accommodate.

If you come from Boston you must stop at Belchertown 10 miles from S. Hadley. If you take a private conveyance from there they will charge you the common price of 75 ct. The Amherst & Springfield stage stops at Belchertown about the time the Boston stage arrives & if you can get there & stop at Belchertown Greenly you can be brought 3 miles for 1/2 da. On arriving at Greenly inquire of the keeper of the public house if conveyances have been sent for carrying the scholars to the seminary at S. Hadley & when they start the public house has engaged to convey one scholar for 1.50 cts.

Would you not like to come a little before the

LETTER TO MISS HANNAH O. BAILEY October 12, 1837
Giving directions for travel from Boston to South Hadley



LETTER TO MISS BAILEY (continued)

(*See page 288*)

XXIX

THE SEMINARY OPENS

November 8, 1837

No letter of Miss Lyon's now extant describes the opening day of Mount Holyoke Seminary. But contemporary accounts, and recollections gathered and recorded later, give the picture.

"How well I remember November 8, 1837," writes one of those first students. ". . . how uninviting the plain brick building! The bare walls seemed almost insecure from their narrow height. There were no trees, no fence, and not a blade of grass, but a deep bed of sand lay all around the house. In the absence of front steps we alighted on the back side of the basement at a door opening into the dining room. At one end of the room a group were at work on unfinished comfortables. At the other, tables were spread for hungry travelers. Mrs. Deacon Safford, a royal woman with a lovely face, and Mrs. Deacon Porter, of no less princely gifts, were washing crockery in the great kitchen. Presently Miss Lyon appeared, her face all aglow under the traditional turban, and gave us the welcome of a mother to her daughters. 'Come right up stairs,' she said, 'you have come to help us,' in a voice that had the true home ring. Heart met heart, teacher and pupil were one, and we followed her to the seminary hall. Deacon Safford, with his coat off, was on his knees tacking straw matting on the platform. Looking up with a bright smile he said, 'We are in glorious confusion now, but shall soon be in order.' "[1]

Mr. Porter and Mr. and Mrs. Safford stayed for the first week or ten days to help get things started. "Mr. Safford," the report goes on, " . . . worked day after day till long after dark, setting up bedsteads and stoves, unpacking and arranging furniture, and the like, just as if he were the father of this great family. Mr. Porter devoted

his attention mostly to the out-door concerns, and, by the way, gave Miss Lyon lessons in book-keeping."

> "At four o'clock, the matting was down, the bell was rung, and Mount Holyoke Seminary opened! Though the sound of the hammer, the plane, and the lathe, was still heard about the house, no other day could be thought of, for this was the one appointed. . . . Supper came at a late hour. There were eighty of us to be disposed of for the night. Not enough mattresses had been unpacked for us all to have beds, even on the floor." [2]

Miss Lyon was everywhere, helping, guiding, inspiring, cheering. Some went to Mr. Condit's for the night; others to other welcoming homes. Breakfast, prepared under the direction of Miss Lyon, who seemed to have been up most of the night, was served to the family of eighty in the morning.

> "We brought our wood and water from the basement," writes one, "and thought it no hardship. We were so glad to have a place in the seminary, for we knew that more than twice our number had been refused for want of room. It was not long before each room had its wood-bin in the corresponding story of the wooden wing, and each story soon had its water cistern filled by a force-pump in the basement." [2]

Of Miss Lyon's feelings we may judge best from the report by a pupil of one of her early talks.

Every brick of this house is consecrated. You must not call this Miss Lyon's school. I regard it so truly a child of Providence that I do not like to have my name made prominent. And you would look upon it as I do if you could see the many gulfs that were to me impassable, bridged over by the divine Hand. Sometimes all seemed to hang upon some slight pivot, without which the whole would have fallen to the ground. I can see a ruling Hand in everything connected with its establishment, and I would have you ever remember that you are studying in an institution built by the hand of the Lord.[3]

TWELVE YEARS AT MOUNT HOLYOKE

The letters of the Holyoke years are, when assembled, the most scattered and disconnected of the entire collection. Yet they are for that very reason among the most revealing. Except in a couple of cases they are in no set pattern, but come along naturally as events call them forth. It is as if we followed Miss Lyon as she swung around the wide circle of her interests and heard her comments.

Letter-writing itself was a luxury in the first few months. Mrs. Cowles gives a picture of Miss Lyon as coming to the rescue when no pupil or teacher had ever before seen one of the new-fangled Rumford ovens, and certainly no one had ever mastered the process of making bread for a family of eighty. So Miss Lyon carried her portable writing desk to the baking-room. "There, in a warm corner beside the oven, at such intervals as she could command, she conducted at the same time her extensive correspondence, and watched the baking processes."

Here we must pick and choose from the file, both to avoid repetition and because of lack of space. Yet the massing of these hurried letters, along with some which are more intimate or more formal, shows Miss Lyon in a way that is different from all the other pictures. We feel we know her better when we have read them—and that is the purpose of this collection.

XXX

THE DOMESTIC SYSTEM—A "MERE APPENDAGE"

No feature of Miss Lyon's school attracted so much attention as the arrangement by which this feminine community did its own housework. From the first it was criticized by outsiders and deprecated by many of Miss Lyon's intimates and well-wishers. Miss Lyon herself always declared that she planned it as a somewhat temporary expedient, useful because it reduced expense and thus made her cause more appealing to the benevolent public, but a "mere appendage" to the institution. As she saw it in operation she came to defend it warmly, finding it, as she once said, "a sieve that keeps out the inefficient and indolent who would not be benefitted by the seminary." She nearly wore herself out in getting it started and keeping it running, but she got her reward in satisfaction at the smooth functioning of this incredibly intricate machinery. Among the several idealistic New England attempts at communal living in these particular decades, none is more worthy of our interested attention than this busy colony which continued to operate on its initial pattern long after its founder's death.

She had to defend and explain her idea almost as soon as it was announced. Three years before the opening of Mount Holyoke Seminary, she expresses to Hannah White (August 1, 1834) her exasperation at mistaken criticisms.

I suppose you have heard that I am endeavoring to establish a *manual labor* school for ladies. I have heard so. But as it is not true, I wish the mistake could be corrected. I will tell you what I should be glad to have done. You know it has become very popular for our highest and best seminaries for young men to be moderate in their expenses. It is not a sufficient recommendation for a college to be expensive. But how different it is with regard to female seminaries! Even at the present time, almost in the middle of the nineteenth century, do not many value them accord-

ing to their expensiveness? Is it not rather gratifying to young ladies to attend expensive schools, when perhaps their brothers would rather glory in pursuing their studies at a moderate expense? Is there not a general feeling that female education *must* be costly, and that those who cannot pay the price must do without it? . . . I will now tell you what I wish could be done. I wish the same public interest could be excited to extend female education to the common walks of life that exists with regard to the education of young men. If the church would do the same for young ladies that she has done, and is continually doing, for young men, the work would be accomplished.

Christian support is what she covets for the highest female seminaries. But if an institution is to ask for public support, it must have certain marked features which would be approved by "common Christians."

On this account [she continues], I have thought that, in the proposed seminary, it would be well to have the domestic work done by the members, not as an essential feature of the institution, but as a mere appendage. But this mere appendage ought, by no means to give the name of *manual labor* to the scheme. I have not the least faith in any of the proposed kinds of manual labor, by which it is supposed that females can support themselves at school, such as raising silk, attending to grape-vines, spinning, sewing, &c. I should expect that any attempt of the kind would become a bill of expense rather than an income, to any female seminary.

Miss Lyon then goes on to state her objective with a definiteness which sets is apart form these other schemes and shows it as being in her mind simply an extension of the family principle to a larger family of one hundred.

After the acquaintance I have had with many cultivated and interesting families, where the daughters, in a systematic manner, performed all the labor, I have the greatest confidence that a

system might be formed, by which all the domestic work of a family of one hundred could be performed by the young ladies themselves, and in the most perfect order, without any sacrifice of improvement in knowledge or refinement. Might not this simple feature do away much of the prejudice against female education among common people? If this prejudice could be removed, how much would it do for the cause! Some of the specific features of the great object in which I am engaged will seem to some of our friends like new views different from my former ones. Not so new as might seem; they are of no very recent date. The only difference is, that I did not consider it expedient, while I was connected with Miss Grant and this institution, to say much about these views.[1]

The "manual labor" idea came, in part, from other experiments which were being tried at the time, notably the Oberlin one. Of this Miss Grant wrote, while on western tour, to Miss Lyon in September, 1834, as follows:

> "It seems to me that there should be several schools embracing this plan of some domestic labor in every state. Every gentleman with whom I have conversed on this subject, would greatly prefer to place his daughters in such an institution, rather than in one of the same principles on the common plan, leaving expenses out of the question. I believe I wrote to you that a proposition for such a school had been brought before a meeting of clergyman (*sic*) in Indiana. In the Oberlin Institute, it is already in operation. All the work for the boarding department is performed by 15 female scholars & Mrs. Stuart the domestic superintendent. Their number of male pupils is 35 but all do not board in the establishment." [2]

At Oberlin Collegiate Institute, founded in 1833, families were to be gathered, according to the original plan, to organize a community or colony—a plan described by its originators as involving the establishment of a school "with such facilities for self-support as the 'Manual Labor System' was supposed to represent." Here all of both

sexes were required to labor for four hours daily, the young men in the institution farm, mills, or workshop, the young ladies performing domestic labor in the boarding hall. The young ladies were paid three to four cents an hour for their work, to be applied on board, which was at the rate for them of seventy-five cents a week. (The boys must pay $1.00 a week.) Within a year the hours of labor were cut to three hours. The scheme gradually faded out of the picture as the supply of available work proved insufficient to meet the students' requirements.[3]

This was not in the least Miss Lyon's idea. She was trying to cut down expense by a system familiar in most New England homes, by enlarging the usual household arrangements to serve one hundred or more scholars and teachers. The family idea was always predominant in Miss Lyon's mind. Her girls were her "daughters." She wished them under her own roof. She wished a true democracy with no class distinctions between boarders and servants. As we read of the multiplicity of tasks, it is difficult to transport ourselves back to the times and realize that neither the hours nor the duties were as unusual to these girls as they seem from the modern viewpoint. The educational and social features of the seminary so far overshadowed this household routine, as Miss Lyon intended they should, that it was rarely that a girl was deterred from coming by the prospect of this hour-a-day duty, and Mount Holyoke attracted girls from cultured and well-to-do families who took this feature of the life as much for granted as they did the examinations, the daily outdoor exercise, and the religious interest, also common to their homes and schools.

So much for the theory. To find a lady who could run such a scheme proved almost impossible even for Miss Lyon. In the months preceding the opening of the Seminary her correspondence shows her as following up several suggested leads. Of the result she writes, December 1, 1837:

We are going forward with a great deal of pleasantness. For the present, Miss Caldwell and the other teachers take all the care of the school. I found Miss Peters could do but little towards organizing though I think she may do well in superintending after things are arranged. I observed in a day or two after we began that every thing seemed like a mountain to her, the business

was so perplexing, the inconvenience so great, the difficulties so many. She had the headache, could not sleep nights, etc. I could not bring another to cooperate with her and it was evident duty for me to do all I could myself. For a few days I was in her department almost continually, when not called away by other cares relating to the fixing of furniture, receiving and arranging scholars etc. etc. After a few days I proposed to Miss Peters, that I would for a short time divide the cares with her till she should be restored or the business organized.

I have taken the care of the washing, ironing, sweeping, baking, washing dishes, rubbing knives, besides many other nameless things. I can now go on very well. After a while I think Miss Peters can take care of the whole. . . . In their domestic work the young ladies are all that I could wish. I should not have supposed that in three weeks they would have been prepared to go forward with so much system as they do now.[4]

Miss Peters did not prove equal to the task, as we discover in a lengthy epistle of the following summer to Reverend Theron Baldwin, who was at this time starting Monticello Seminary, in Godfrey, Illinois. In reply to his request for information concerning the system with a view to possibly introducing it, she gives the story of the first months.

But your inquiries refer more particularly to the little appendage of our domestic department. With *us* this is entirely successful. The positive advantages of our plan are for us far greater than I anticipated. The difficulties & the immense labor of organizing were far greater than I anticipated. The final success is far greater than my most sanguine expectations.

I found by experiment, that the qualifications for a lady at the head of the domestic department must be so varied and extensive, that it would be far easier to find all my teachers than one to fill this place. . . . Though the lady whom I engaged would do well for many places, she could not sustain the amount of responsibility of the place. She spent a few months with us but I did not dare give her the direct responsibility of the department,

lest it should be the means of making the whole unpopular. In all such cases, you know there is but one course to be taken. *We* must do the work *ourselves*. When we have had an interest in planning, we can sometimes make up in zeal what we lack in skill. Since she left us, we have had no regular superintendent.[5] I have the general direction, but the immediate care is taken by two young ladies, who are in this department like assistant pupils, devoting a part of their time to study & a part superintending the domestic work. These we term "General Leaders." This plan I like much better than to have a regular superintendent, unless I can find one in whom I have entire confidence as adapted to the situation. Every thing is done better, & more pleasantly for the young ladies, & with much less care & solicitude on my part.

This failure in the domestic superintendant (*sic*) was a great disappointment, but it has not been without its advantages. Every part of the plan on which the young ladies are organized for their domestic work, is the result of personal observation. For many weeks I was engaged many hours every day, about the domestic department—sometimes contriving about the fitting of the furniture, & cooking utensils—again planning for the division of labor, & for time & place, so that everything could be done in season & in order without any loss to the young ladies, & with no interference with studies or recitations. I had several points to gain, & sometimes my whole energy was devoted to one, & sometimes to another.—One point was that a high standard should be established for the manner of having the work done—another that every department should be popular with the young ladies.[6]

How much of her own inspiring and untiring energy she herself put into the initial carrying on of the scheme. Miss Lyon admits, but she was soon able to see the results.

For three or four months I never left the family for a single half day. I then said to the young ladies, that I considered the family as organized, & that I wished to go to Boston to be absent two or three weeks that I might (besides finding a little rest)

know whether the wheels which I had been occupied so long in arranging could move without my aid. On my return, everything was in perfect order, & there has not been a time since, when I could not be absent or sick three months without sensible loss to the domestic department. Now I need not go into the kitchen once a month unless I prefer, though I do love daily to pass around from room to room in the basement story, & see how delightfully the wheels move forward. I trust you will excuse this egotistocal (*sic*) description of the organization of our domestic department, as the object is to give you facts as they are.[6]

The work, she goes on to explain, is divided into three departments, first, the daily work of the family, second, the washing of the clothes of the young ladies, and their rooms, and third, all the remainder of the washing clothes, floors, etc., which is called "extra work." Each department is divided into circles, each with a leader. The circles are formed and the leaders appointed for an entire term, the work of each circle coming at a definite and regular hour each day. Cooking is under the immediate care of the two young assistants, who are called "general leaders."

Because of the length of this letter, with its detailed description of the division of the work, we can quote here only a few phrases which show Miss Lyon's personal pleasure in the results. "The young ladies like to keep our house as neat as any that can be found elsewhere. They never object to washing floors twice a week, & every day if needful, nor to rubbing knives every meal. How unlike common domestics!" And again:

I have been a boarder most of the time for more than 20 years, but I never had every thing done for me, & so perfectly done, as now. It is sweet to be in our own house, & to feel that we have but one interest in the whole establishment, instead of the three separate interests of most regular boarding houses—that of the keepers of the house—that of the boarders themselves—& that of the hired domestics. The young ladies sympathize with me very deeply in this feeling. We have a hired man, who takes care of the garden, saws wood, etc. & performs various little offices, necessary for our comfort. He boards himself. We have not a single

domestic in the family. When we commenced, I supposed it might be better that we should have one or two. I am now satisfied, that we are better without.[6]

That Miss Lyon was not led into undue enthusiasm by her own predilection for this democratic plan is shown by her final discussion concerning the advisability of Mr. Baldwin's adopting the scheme.

With regard to other institutions adopting this plan of doing the domestic work my views are these. It is not a plan which would be indifferent in its effects. The influence must be decidedly salutary or decidedly injurious. So I think. If I had the care of young ladies of not very much character as boarders, I should be very particular with them about entering the kitchen, or any apartment where they would come in contact with domestics, or the domestic work, as a necessary means of promoting their own happiness. Allowing them free access to every part of the building as our young ladies have to this, would be suited to make them officious & meddlesome. In order to render the domestic work pleasant, it seems necessary that the greatest freedom of social intercourse should be allowed. We find no disadvantage from this, but the reverse. But this would not be the case with scholars of less character.

Our circumstances are so very favorable, that I feel that the plan is scarcely a test for others. In the first place, we have none under 16, & nearly all are from fine well bred families of N. England. They have been generally well educated thus far, & well trained in domestic pursuits. Again, we have no domestics. If any thing is not quite so pleasant, the query never arises whether it is not more suitable that domestics should do it. The family is so large, that by a proper division of time, all can be done, & each occupied but a short time. No young lady feels that she is performing a duty, from which she could be released by the payment of higher bills.[6]

The advantages she lists as threefold: exercise, the promotion of social and domestic happiness, and the union of interests. The dis-

cussion of the relation of exercise and study is an exposition of one of Miss Lyon's pet educational theories,

Exercise. This is worth very much more than I anticipated, especially in the winter. The daily work brings one hour of regular exercise coming every day, & the same hour of the day. The exercise is peculiarly fitted to the constitution of females. Then there are the collateral influences, so important to render exercise beneficial. There is a necessity about it, & no wasting of time in querying whether it may not be omitted with impunity—the social vivacity, & home associations connected with it, are not without their use. One hour's necessary exercise every day seems to give them a relish for exercise. The oldest & most studious scholars are those who have always troubled me by neglecting exercise. But they walk more here of their own accord without influence than any young ladies of the same character I have ever seen. They have noticed the wild plants they have found growing in the fields. A majority have found 200, & some many more.

Our young ladies study with great intensity but they seem just as vigorous the last of the term as ever. The vivacity & apparent vigor of our young ladies near the close of our winter term of 20 weeks, & at the examination, was noticed as unusual by gentlemen of discrimination. Whatever they do, they seem to do with their might—whether it be study, or walking, or domestic work, or gathering plants, or singing.[6]

Even Miss Lyon seems to have been puzzled as to how to get the washing for this great family done without interfering with the study program. She solved the problem by combining washing day, on the traditional New England Monday, with recreation day; and it worked!

I did fear [she continues], that the washing would seem a loss of time. But we take it on our recreation day, & it only serves to make the day more effectual in meeting its object. The studies of the best scholars are broken in upon more effectually, & after working they are willing to sew or read, & write etc. instead of

continuing to pore over their books. Studious & especially *avaricious* scholars are very apt to study recreation days, when all they gain is more than counterbalanced by the diluting influence on the intensity of the study other days.

Concerning the second point of advantage, the social gain, she comments:

The young ladies feel at home, & on coming together are very soon acquainted with each other. Their work is all very social. One young lady remarked last spring, that she had been rather homesick, but the first washing day was an effectual remedy.

As regards the "union of interests," (her third point) she remarks on "the wisdom of the divine appointment in the organization of families" as appearing in this respect "peculiarly striking." She ends this long Baldwin letter, of which her much rewritten draft is in the Mount Holyoke archives, with this paragraph:

You have known of ministers writing long sermons because they did not take time to write short ones. So it is with this letter. I thought I could put all on one sheet, & probably I could if I had time to compress. But I have only had a few minutes at one time, & a few at another. . . . I hope this letter will not be lost on its way.[6]

The pictures girls and teachers give of domestic work are varied and colorful. They were much impressed by the conveniences, which were much beyond those in the average home. Students recalled in after life the "great, beautiful domestic hall, with its "many contrivances for neatness, economy, and convenience." All marveled at the Rumford oven, given by Deacon Safford, an innovation in these days preceding the common use of stoves. "Two large ovens . . . filled the whole or nearly the whole of one side," writes a student in later recollections of the kitchens. "In the sheet iron or Rumford we baked all of the wheaten bread, pies, cakes, and light puddings. In

the brick oven we baked the mixed or rye and Indian bread, corn-meal pudding, white beans, etc." This Rumford oven was a sheet iron box with a compartment beneath in which the fire was built. Elizabeth Bull, who writes the much-quoted journal letter concerning the first month after the opening of the seminary in November, 1837, describes it thus:

> "We have a baking room, . . . kneading room, wash room, ironing room, dining room, and kitchen in the basement, with most excellent apparatus for each. . . . Our oven is called the Rumford; suppose that is the name of the inventor. It is so constructed that the fire is under, and the oven always free from fire, ashes, or dust. Deacon Safford's name is on it, which leads me to think he is a manufacturer of them." [7]

Lucy Fletcher gives in her journal under date of October 25, 1841, a picture of her use of it.

> "This morning was my first exploit in getting breakfast. I was called about 4 o'clock and obliged to get up, though sorely against my inclination, and went down into Domestic Hall, looking as sleepy as would be and feeling all the time as if I wished I were back in bed. However, I moulded, and mixed, and stirred, and I believe went through all the necessary performances till the pudding was boiled, and the biscuit baked, and the kettles set in order when I went into breakfast with an appetite in no way impaired by my morning's work. Since I came here I have been blessed with an *enormous* appetite. I eat with all a school-girl's voracity." [7]

That the girls of the first year entered into Miss Lyon's feeling of freedom because of the absence of paid servants is shown by a letter of Nancy Everett, written November 26, 1837, two weeks and a half after the opening day. She writes to her uncle, Melatiah Everett:

> "There are just seventy-nine scholars, which with three teachers, Miss Lyon, and the superintendent of the domestic

department make a family of eighty-four. You can hardly imagine what a formidable line we make going to church, or taking our daily walks. I believe, if ever there was a happy family it is this. We are so independent; that is if we wish *for* anything or to *do* anything—we are at perfect liberty to do or get it, without a parcel of hired girls, scowling upon us, or wishing us out of the way."[7]

To Nancy as well as to others who came from well-appointed homes, the building seemed very satisfying. All marveled at the domestic hall with its extremely modern conveniences. The crockery was willow-ware, and other appointments were as carefully selected. Nancy speaks in this same letter of the "two splendid double parlors," the Wheaton gift, and of the walls "with hard finish put on," and the woodwork well painted, "which makes it look perfectly in good taste —just like the one who gave directions, viz. Miss Lyon."

To the modern mind the hours of rising both at Ipswich and here at Mount Holyoke seem a needless hardship; a quarter before five in summer and a quarter before six in winter. But one realizes that they must reflect the habits of the time, for obviously girls boarding in private homes in Ipswich did not arise before the hour of family custom or require meals at unusual hours.

Lucy Thurston Goodale contributes in a letter of October, 1839, the day's schedule at Mount Holyoke, which we abridge.

26 bells daily. Everything done in circles. Two young ladies appointed to light a lamp in each room and then the rising bell ten minutes before 5 o'clock, at 5 the "tardy bell", at 5¼ the bell for the first "half hour", at 20 minutes before 6 the second half hour, and breakfast at six. Warning bell at quarter past seven—Some getting dinner, the rest practising calisthenics; 7.30 Seminary Hall, morning salutation, hymn sung, remainder of hour Miss Lyon devotes to doctrinal instruction. Recitations, etc. Then the preparation of dinner (Miss Lyon usually in the kitchen with her accustomed energy). Dinner—all going to the Seminary Hall, about half an hour occupied in giving accounts—of walking, clothes in

repair, etc. 4.30 recreation hour, in which we walk, make calls, read, do anything except study. 5.30 supper bell, after supper devotional exercises. Then 1¼ study hour, 9¼ retiring bell, 9½ tardy bell.[7]

Yet the girls came soon to take this amazing program for granted. Lucy tells how happy Miss Lyon is when visitors compliment her on the health and brightness of her pupils. "As for our daily work of an hour, "says this gentle, responsive girl, who fitted gladly into all the features of seminary life, "I know not what we should do without it. Miss Lyon says if we depend on walking alone for exercise, we should be tempted whenever a little pressed with study, to think we cannot spare the time, we must wait till tomorrow, but now we are obliged to exercise at least one hour."

The single tasks were simple in themselves; and only Miss Lyon and her assistants had to carry in their minds the entire schedule and fit everything into place. The girls performed their duties gaily and were rather proud to report them to the home people.

Lucy writes in a home letter of April 10, 1838:

"Just come from dinner. After every dinner and supper cousin Elizabeth and I go to washing plates and I think you would laugh to see the piles of them. At dinner there are usually 200, at breakfast and supper not quite 100. But our happy circle of eight only laugh and they disappear.

"Tomorrow E. and myself are to leave this work for others and go to making pies." [7]

Elizabeth Haven writes to her brother from South Hadley, October 28, 1839:

"Well, Robby here I am fixed in winter quarters as it regards the house, though not yet quite settled in my room but I shall be this week. My studies are not yet arranged because I am not yet through all the examinations which take up four or five weeks. . . .

"We each have to work an hour a day and on washing day

two hours. My domestic work is to wash dishes half an hour after breakfast and after dinner, it is not very hard is it?" [7]

Miss Lyon had told Mr. Baldwin in the letter above quoted that the system was so arranged that is could go on without her, but she did not often put it to that test. The girl who mixed bread every evening at eight o'clock tells how Miss Lyon usually dropped in on her. Other girls tell of Miss Lyon's noticing that some particular kind of work was too hard for them and moving them to another circle. Over and over again, by frequent testimony, the girls were told that they did not come there to be taught domestic work, but that the work was done in this way to make things easier and simpler for both teachers and pupils, beside bringing the price of tuition within the reach of many who could not otherwise afford to come. [The entire cost, exclusive of fuel and lights, was sixty dollars a year.]

The repetition of the same duty must have made for skill at the task. One girl reports daily making of gingerbread. Another says in a letter: "wish you could see me making Yeast some morning; will you believe that I, as anti-domestic as I am, make the *leaven* that leavens the whole lump at Holyoke?" Of the minute division of the tasks we may judge by the record in Abby Spaulding's letter to Nancy Everett, November 24, 1838:

"One has it for her daily work to wake the one who rings the bell. Another has it for hers, to rise when waked, ring the first bell & make fires ½ an hour." [7]

In his appraisal of the domestic department of the seminary, prepared for the memoir nearly two years after Miss Lyon's death, Dr. Hitchcock says that "those who have had the oversight of the plan, and have seen most of its operation, would consider it a great calamity to be obliged to give it up, and resort to hired help in the family. They are confident that this great family have got along much more pleasantly than by any other plan which could have been adopted."[8]

In pamphlets issued before 1840 setting forth the principles of the school, Miss Lyon summed up once more her views as they had been strengthened by a practical demonstration of their effect. We quote from one issued in 1839 entitled "Tendencies of the Principles embraced and the System adopted in the Mount Holyoke Female

Seminary."[9] Under the general heading "Social and domestic Character," she writes:

The excellence of the female character in this respect consists principally in a preparation to be happy herself in her social and domestic relations, and to make all others happy around her. All her duties, of whatever kind, are in an important sense social and domestic. They are retired and private, and not public, like those of the other sex. Whatever she does beyond her own family should be but another application and illustration of social and domestic excellence. . . .

The following elements should be embraced in the social and domestic character of a lady:—

(a.) *Economy.*—Economy consists in providing well at little comparative expense. It necessarily implies good judgment and good taste. It can be equally manifested in the tasteful decorations of a palace and in the simple comforts of a cottage. . . . This institution, it is well known, is distinguished for its economical features. Economy, however, is not adopted principally for its own sake, but as a means of education, as a mode of producing favorable effects on character, and of preparing young ladies for the duties of life. The great object is to make the school really better. An economical character is to be formed by precept, by practice, and by example. . . . Let a young lady spend two or three years, on intimate terms, in a family distinguished for a judicious and consistent illustration of this principle, and the effects cannot be lost.

(b.) *A suitable Feeling of Independence.*—There are two kinds of dependence, very unlike in their nature, but both inconsistent with the highest degree of domestic bliss. To one of these ladies in cities and large towns are more particularly subject; but it is an evil from which ladies in the country are not wholly exempt. It is a feeling of dependence on the will of servants. Every lady should be so educated, as far as it can be done, that she will feel able to take care of herself, and, if need be, of a family,

whatever may be her situation in life, and whatever her station in society. Otherwise, if she remains in these United States, she may be rendered unhappy by constantly feeling that her daily comforts are at the control of her servants, who in such cases are often unfaithful, unreasonable, and dissatisfied. . . . Against this kind of dependence this institution seeks to exert its decided influence. The whole aspect of the family, and all the plans of the school, are suited to cultivate habits entirely the reverse. In the domestic independence of the household all have an interest. The daily hour for these duties returns to each at the appointed time, and no one inquires whether it can be omitted or transferred to another. No one receives any pecuniary reward for her services, and no one seeks with her money to deprive herself of the privilege of sharing in the freedom, simplicity, and independence of her *home*.

An undated letter to her niece Abigail Moore, assistant in the seminary from its opening until 1846, belongs apparently to the vacation mentioned in the Baldwin letter.

Worcester, Monday P.M.

My dear Niece,

On the way to this place I have some of the time been sleeping & some of the time thinking of you. I fear I have forgotten some things. If it continues so cold, I doubt not that you will have a good fire in the parlor seminary hall, & other rooms if needed. I said to Miss Woods, that I thought we might do without a fire in the parlor till I returned, by having a fire in my room where company could warm them. But it is so cold that I think it would now better to have a good fire in the parlor, & then you need not keep a fire in my room only when you need it for yourselves. You may burn kitchen wood in my room. Misses Dickenson & Hawks can show the young ladies where the wood is for their own chambers, & those who have some now can borrow from the others. Miss Finch knows how to make a coal fire, if she can be spared a part of the time from baking. In the upper story of the

wood house, the first parcel of wood, is for the seminary hall, & the other school rooms where the stoves will take in as long wood. Remember in the same story, there is a parcel for other school rooms which need short wood. Marion can tell you where.

I think it best that Miss Spence writes immediately to her sister saying that she may come & Miss Chapin to her cousin & other friend, & Miss Eastman to her friend. If Miss Brigham thinks it best, she may write to Miss Warner, of Grafton, & say that if she can stay a year she may come. In every case a catalogue must be sent, if they have had none, that they may not come without being prepared.

When the washtubs are put in, I want you should see about the distances. The young ladies in standing at them are to face the window, so that they can see better, except the tier against the other wall. There was to be a little shelf on the back edge of tubs with a back a few inches for soap & lamps—not to extend beyond the tubs. Dea. Montague is to bring this evening a bushel of corn ground corn for hominy, & a bushel as fine as it can be for puddings, & bread. When it is nearly gone, ask him to bring two bushels more.

If Mr. Hawks has not left, please to ask him, if he can engage Mr. Witt's boy to do errands for a definite price an hour. If he has gone you can if you need something done go down & see Mrs. Witt, & see if he will do it, saying that I will pay him what is right when I return. If you cannot get him, get the Warner boy in the same way.

Be careful to send for two bottles of tooth powder, & send by Miss Woods. You can write a note & send the Witt boy. Do it immediately, lest he may want to prepare it. Please to take the names of those who have a permanent seat below, & see Mr. Gilbert Smith to ascertain if more can be accommodated, & look over a catalogue with Martha Leach to select the most important. Do not let Miss Woods forget Miss Caldwell's. . . . Do not fail to call on Mrs. Lathrop at Mrs. Allen & apologize for my not calling.

Much love to the teachers. May you all be receive a rich re-

ward for all your labors & all your kindness. Between this & Friday morning I should think the examinations, which need the presence of all the teachers & during Miss Woods's absence there in arithmetic can be carried forward by Miss Brigham & Miss . . .

Love to all the scholars.

Truly yours,
Mary Lyon.[10]

XXXI

IN THE FIRST YEARS

"Let is not be supposed," writes one of Mary Lyon's contemporary biographers, "that Miss Lyon's labors this first year were limited to the domestic and financial concerns of the institution. She matured a course of study, watched the recitations, directed individual scholars in the selection of their studies, criticized compositions, instructed the Middle Class in chemistry, performing with them a course of experiments, and taught several other branches. For the first time in her life, she taught Whately's logic. It was her first acquaintance with that prince of living thinkers and reasoners. She entered into the science with as much eagerness and relish as she had plunged into Virgil in the days of her youth, leading the class through moods, figures, and fallacies, as ably as any professor of metaphysics." [1]

Miss Lyon was too busy to write any but the most necessary letters that first year. We are fortunate in having the long letter, dated July 12, 1838, in which she reports so fully to Mr. Theron Baldwin, who was at the same time starting Monticello Seminary in Godfrey, Illinois. We have quoted in the preceding chapter the last few pages of this letter, in which she describes at his request the domestic department. The letter begins, however, with a report on the academic side of the seminary in its opening year.

Rev. Mr. Baldwin,

Dear Sir.

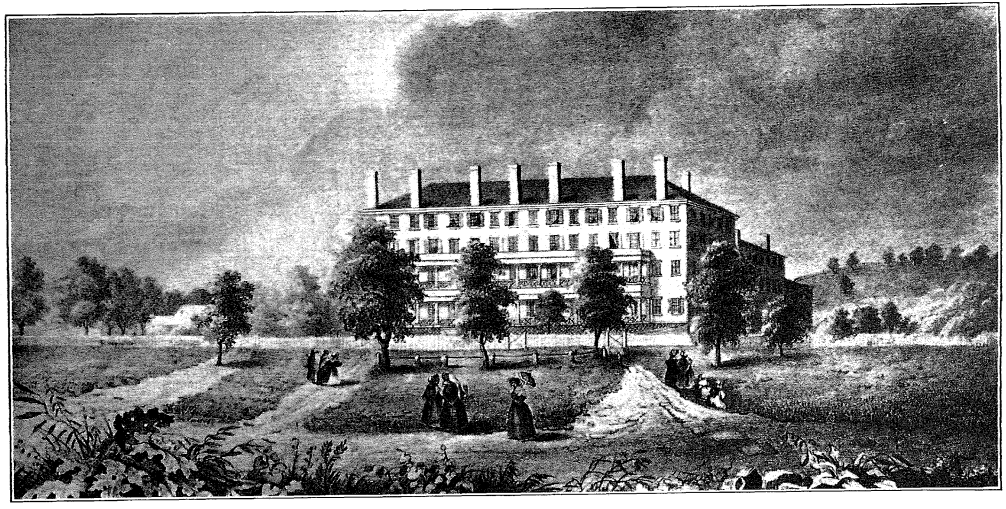
Please to receive my grateful acknowledgment of your favor of June 22. & the accompanying circular. Respecting my correspondence during the last year, I must in some cases plead guilty, but as to yourself I believe I have not been quite as remiss, as would seem by what you have received from me, or rather what you have not received. For six months after the commencement of our term, I passed over all my letters requiring much time into Miss Caldwell's hands to be answered by her. You will not

think it strange, if sometimes I should almost forget the receipt of letters & much more the reply though they relate to persons & things in which I am deeply interested. In the spring Miss Caldwell's health so far failed, that I was obliged to take most of her duties in addition to my own. She has been absent several weeks on account of her health, & has not returned.

Your first letter was answered by Miss Caldwell, if I mistake not. . . . Yours in the autumn making inquiries about Miss Packard etc. I received & replied, but doubted whether it would reach you seasonably. I have sent you a catalogue of our seminary just published.

I rejoice to know that you have commenced under circumstances so favorable. I should be glad to learn all you have time to communicate from time to time. All in our seminary whom I should venture to recommend, I have engaged as teachers here. We have some in the Middle Class, who might (perhaps) *do,* but all such will stay another year to complete the course.

On the whole, the success of our institution in every department is greater than I anticipated. I am more & more interested in this enterprize as a means of developing some important principles of female education—especially that of introducing system. Most of those who have any care of our public seminaries have been greatly discouraged about attempting to introduce system, the pupils have been so unprepared, so dissimilar in age, & so inconstant in their attendance. Our experiment is entirely in favor of limiting the age. We have our requirement of knowledge for entrance, & though we considered it expedient to allow exceptions the first year, we shall not be obliged to continue these exceptions. We considered it expedient the first half year to receive even for one quarter, & the second half for a term. But though we have thought it inexpedient to make requirements about the time of continuance, more than half of those in the winter continued through the summer, & more than half of our present scholars will continue the next year. This is far better than I anticipated on this point in an institution so new. We now venture to require all to stay a year, except in extraordinary cases. Hith-



THE SEMINARY BUILDING

With the addition built in 1841. From a Currier Print

erto we have been under the necessity of refusing nearly half our applicants. For the next year, we have had 200 regular applicants, & most of them would stay a year if they could be received. We can succeed in accommodating about 90. We have had a fine circle of scholars the past year—in scholarship, & character.[2]

[The letter continues with the account of the domestic department quoted on page 225.]

Catalogues and students' journals and letters amplify some of the points in this letter. The age requirement was sixteen years. The statement is made with increasing assurance each year in successive catalogues that students must enter when the year commences and expect to stay till its close, except in extraordinary cases. The entrance requirements are stated in the first catalogue as being an acquaintance with the general principles of English Grammar, a good knowledge of Modern Geography, History of the United States, Watts on the Mind, Colburn's First Lessons, and the whole of Adams's New Arithmetic, or what would be equivalent in Written Arithmetic. The course of instruction is described as a "regular English course of study," with mention even in the first catalogue of individuals devoting part of their time to "branches not included in the regular course (Latin for instance)." Within two years, in the third catalogue, that of 1839-1840, it is stated that while the regular English course of study occupies three years, with some students devoting part of their time to Latin and continuing more than one year in the same class, it is contemplated that the course of study will embrace four years to give a regular time to Latin. The course was paralleling, as nearly as public opinion and the state of preparation of the candidates would allow, that which was being given across the Notch in Amherst College and in other similar institutions of learning for boys. As the years went on, the remark quoted as being made by one onlooker was frequently made by more than one: "Why, one has to have quite a good education before she can enter Holyoke." [3]

A single picture from the journal letter by Lucy Goodale of the opening class will show the individual method of instruction for which Miss Lyon became known. It recalls those efforts of her early days with Professor Eaton to prepare herself to teach chemistry by the experimental method instead of simply by rote,—this at a time when

leading colleges did not have laboratories and when experiments were performed by the professor before the class, not by the students. On July 5, 1838, Lucy writes home:

"Last evening we were reciting in Chemistry when it was nearly dark so that Miss Lyon could hardly see her topics (but that did not matter, she has been over them so often) and suddenly the hall became illuminated, and our eyes were directed to the window where we saw balls of fire flying in every direction. Miss Lyon not only permitted us to stop and look but sent to inform the others. It was a beautiful sight.

"I get along pretty well in my studies Chemistry and Algebra, all things considered. We shall complete the first this week if Miss Lyon's good will and plans are of any avail. Yet I do not know as I shall be very glad for as one young lady said by mistake, 'She will perform no more miracles then.' These as you may suppose, I like very much. The other day I stopped after class was dismissed to look at some quick-silver, and she asked me if I should like to assist her, and glad I was of the opportunity. So I tied some zinc turnings together and she put them in a solution of acetate of lead and in a few days we had a beautiful lead tree. Then she told me I might make a looking glass. The first thing to do was to find some glass and for this I was sadly at a loss. At last I thought of a room where the window was broken and went and begged a piece. I fixed the shape as well as I could, made an amalgam of mercury and tin and spread it upon tinfoil, making it very even. I laid it upon the glass and there was a perfect little looking glass." [4]

The rest of this letter is filled with accounts of the closing events of the school term and the preparations for the anniversary to take place in August. Here Miss Lyon's own letters take up the story. The first is to Mr. and Mrs. Geo. W. Heard, of Ipswich days.

South Hadley, Aug. 7, 1838.

Mr. & Mrs. Heard,

Dear Friends,

Two weeks from the present week is the anniversary of our Seminary. Can you not plan to leave your business, your children & your family & come to see us, & our seminary & hear the address. I have requested Dea. Safford to speak with you about it. But I fear there may be some mistake. I cannot tell you how disappointed I have been about the dedication.[5]—that you were not here, & perhaps too that it was my fault—perhaps you would have come, if you had known the time seasonably. How the mistake should have been, that we did not write to you, I cannot exactly tell. Certainly it was in my heart to do it. Besides it was on my memorandum, lest it should be forgotten. For to tell the truth, during the last year, much of the time, amidst all my cares about school, family, domestic concerns, obtaining furniture, setting up housekeeping, economizing our menus, & contriving to do without what we cannot have, it has seemed as if I should forget every thing, unless it was on my memorandum. But a few weeks about the time of dedication was the most difficult. Miss Caldwell's health failed, & she had many other things to occupy her thoughts, & to take what little strength she had. For several weeks, I was obliged to take most of Miss Caldwell's cares in addition to my own. But we have been carried nearly through the year with great kindness & mercy.

On Wed. two weeks from tomorrow, is commencement at Amherst, & on Thurs. A.M. the examinations of our school will close, & in the afternoon, we expect an address from Dr. Hawes of Hartford. Shall we not see you? Will you have the goodness on the reception of this, to drop me a line letting me know how strongly I may hope to see you.

Very sincerely yours,
Mary Lyon.[6]

The anniversary date was August 23. Miss Lyon reports the event to Miss Grant. In view of her comment on Dr. Hawes' address, it is interesting to remember a story that came from the Condit family that this clergyman-friend of Mr. Condit's had never before visited the seminary and came without a very high idea of what he conceived as a female "manual-labor" school. After listening to one of the public examinations, held before outside audiences in the Seminary Hall, he retired to his room and asked to be excused from appearance at meals while he rewrote his anniversary address, saying that it would never do to present anything he had brought with him.[7]

South Hadley, Aug. 27, 1838

My dear Miss Grant,

We have finished our first year. I did want to see you here very much. I send you one of our compositions, which perhaps you may enjoy hearing read sometime for your amusement. I will also send the impression of our seal. You will observe that the devise is designed as an illustration of the quotation of scripture. The composition is transcribed by Miss Mary M. Parker of Keene, who has been with us a few days.

Our examinations were Mon. P.M. Tues. A.M. & Thurs. A.M. On Wed. more than half our young ladies went to Amherst to commencement. The remainder prepared for the next day. The trustees & clergyman were invited to dine with us on Thurs. & some other individuals. We extended our tables to accommodate about 40 more than our own family. We had them just filled. This added considerably to my cares. But the agitation of the question about going to the meeting house on Thurs. P.M. seemed almost to add more, when I had just all I could do. It came up once or twice, & was settled in the negative, as I felt a great reluctance to it. After Dr. Hawes came on Wed. evening, the subject was again discussed. I found that the trustees, Dr. H. & the other gentlemen were all becoming decided that it was best to go to the meeting house. I thought it the most modest to acquiesce. The certificates were given at the close of the exercises, but no other exercise differed from a common public meeting. It did not appear unsuitable as I thought it would, & I was very glad that I

consented. The meeting house was full, & I think some of our donors would have been dissatisfied, if we had met in the seminary hall. Our certificates were signed by Miss Caldwell & myself, & simply countersigned by the Secretary of the Board (Mr. Condit). Of course the giving of the certificates devolved on Mr. Condit. He did it in his neat, elegant manner. Dr. Hawe's address was good common sense but not quite as finished as I should have liked. His health almost caused a failure, which was a good excuse. It was good common sense however. Mr. Boies of Boston made the first prayer, & Dr. Con. the last. Dr. C. happened to be at Northampton, & came over with one of the ministers to hear the address.

Miss Parker has transcribed the composition from rather a blind copy, & I fear there may be some mistakes.

I think of you often, very often. I love to think of you when I am alone, & no one present but *God*.—our covenant keeping God. I should love to just look on you from day to day, & give you a little of heartfelt sympathy, but you have a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. My heart's desire & prayer to God is that this Friend may be ever with you with his comforting & unretiring presence.

Truly yours,
Mary Lyon.[8]

Miss Z.P. Grant
Ipswich

As Miss Lyon says in her letter, she had planned that the exercises should take place in her own familiar seminary hall, but when it became evident that not half of the number of friends and parents could be accommodated there, she submitted the question to the trustees. Miss Caldwell completes the picture of this first Commencement procession at Mount Holyoke.

> "They [the trustees] decided in favor of going to the church. Under their escort, the orator of the day, Rev. Dr. Hawes of Hartford, the teachers, the Senior class, and the school, went to the church in procession. They walked with heads uncovered,

shaded by parasols. The side pews and galleries were already crowded with interested spectators, when Miss Lyon led her beautiful troop in quiet dignity to the seats reserved for them. It was an hour in her life never to be forgotten. The battle had been fought, the victory was hers. Public opinion had come over to a good degree to her side." [9]

The certificate or diploma was upon parchment, in the style of a college diploma, but with the simple wording that recalled Derry days concerning the completion of the prescribed course of study and the attainments entitling to "this testimonial." The "device" of which Miss Lyon speaks was a vignette designed by Mrs. Hitchcock, illustrating the verse quoted below, Psalm cxliv.14, "That our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace." Dr. Hitchcock, in the memoir, describes it as "a palace, in front of which, on the right, a quarry is represented, with blocks of stone in various stages of preparation for architectural purposes. On the left are several ladies, intended to represent teachers and pupils."[10] The seal of which Miss Lyon promises to send Miss Grant an impression bears a similar design and was attached by a ribbon to the parchment, the color of the ribbon being, according to tradition, the Holyoke blue, selected with great care as to the right shade by Miss Lyon.

The radiance of Miss Lyon's face was what impressed the onlookers at this first anniversary. There are many recorded recollections by students of succeeding years of Miss Lyon as wearing on such occasions a lavender silk dress with white lace at the neck, the soft color bringing out the flush on her cheeks and the tints of her reddish-brown hair. Usually Miss Lyon walked rapidly, with quick, short steps, her elbows a little out from her body; but on such occasions she moved with real dignity.

XXXII

PERSONAL LETTERS

Along with the business and school correspondence of these Mount Holyoke years we find occasional letters to family and friends which let us in behind the scenes of Miss Lyon's public life. Without them something would be missing from our knowledge of the real Mary Lyon.

During the period of Miss Lyon's breaking out from Ipswich and starting the new school, there are hints, more by omission than otherwise, of a slight rift in the relation with Miss Grant. Looking on, one feels that it could hardly have been otherwise. The diverting of the stream of Miss Lyon's abounding life and energy from the joint enterprise into a new channel withdrew from Miss Grant a support on which she had come to depend. The attitude of some members of the Mount Holyoke committee of 1835-1836 in seeking periodically (in moments when their funds and courage ran low) to link Miss Grant's name and fame with the prospective school must have been very trying to Miss Lyon. The new school when it opened must have attracted some girls who would otherwise have turned to Ipswich. That the friendship weathered these temporary disturbances and became once more a source of deep and abiding comfort to both women, both the number of the later letters to Miss Grant and their contents testify.

In April, 1838, Miss Lyon wrote her friend a letter of which we have a partial manuscript as well as a printed version.

Do you now and then like to receive a line from me, or have you so many other cares, that it is a tax on your strength more than it is worth? The intimate communion which continued between us for so many years, I do not, I cannot forget. Sometimes former views, and former intercourse, and former mutual duties and obligations, and mutual kindness and faithfulness, in contrast with the present non-intercourse almost between us, come over me with an overwhelming power. I know it must be

so. I know you cannot come to see me, nor can I go to see you; and if I could, I should not feel at liberty to tax your strength with my visits. The same is true with regard to our writing. I am generally entirely reconciled. But occasionally, when I have heard nothing from you for weeks or months, only as I do by the by, as I do from any of my common acquaintances, I find myself involuntarily saying, Is that the same friend with whom I lived and labored so many years, with whom I had so much intercourse from day to day, and with whom I exchanged so many letters? This is the changeableness of earth. How transitory is everything here! It seems as if I could say of nothing that it has long been, but only that it once was; or that it now is, and may be a few days longer. Of all the changes that take place, the changing of friends, of companions, of fellow-laborers, of fellow-travelers through this pilgrimage, is the most painful. Rather let these changes come year by year, and month by month, so that there may be no tender and long-strengthened cords to be torn asunder—that there may be no train of recollection and former communion to add to scenes of desolation.[1]

We have quoted, in the preceding chapter, the letter to Miss Grant telling of the first anniversary of the opening of the school. A fragment of a letter dated February, 1839, with the name of its recipient missing, shows Miss Lyon's attitude about receiving pupils from Ipswich.

My dear Friend:

I have received application for the admission of two young ladies next year, who are now members of the seminary at Ipswich. I am doubting about receiving them. It appears to me more and more important for the cause of education, that these two seminaries remain united in the firmest bonds of friendship and mutual aid—that the small points of difference should not be made prominent, but should rather be lost in views of the great and grand principles in which they agree. To promote this end, I do not think it well to have scholars pass from one institution to the other. If they have happy dispositions every thing about

them is like Franklin's seasons, and while they express their fondness for the spring, you would almost think, that they disliked the winter. If they do pass from one school to the other, I think it would be much better that it should be early than late in the course. Perhaps you can tell me something about the character and circumstances of these young ladies that will aid me in deciding. The father of one of them has recently subscribed 100 dollars to our funds and on this account it may be desirable that his wishes should be regarded in this particular if there are no peculiar arguments against it.[2]

Miss Grant's poor health and the financial difficulties against which she and Miss Lyon had struggled made her feel unequal to the task of carrying on the Ipswich school after 1839. One of those torn fragments, which so try us by their abrupt endings contains Miss Lyon's expression of regret. It is dated March 27, 1839.

The information that you will relieve yourself from your present labors and cares at the close of the term awakens mingled emotions. It does appear to me a wise course, and I trust it will relieve you from much suffering, and be the means of lengthning your valuable life, and on the whole of adding more to the great amount you have already done for the cause of education and for the cause of Christ. But while I rejoice, my heart is full of tenderest sympathy. How will you be able to pass through all the steps of so important a transaction? My heart yearns over you in fear that you will sink under it. O that I could aid and relieve you. But there is but one thing I can do for you, and this I love to do. It is to ask him who is the nearest and dearest friend of us both, to sustain, comfort and keep you in the hollow of his hand. I rejoice that you have had so interesting, so pleasant and so profitable a school the present term, not only for the amount.[3] . . .

A letter of April 12, 1839, is of interest in reporting the forming of the "Memorandum Society" at the Seminary. As she leaves her school, Miss Grant is evidently disposing of some books.

I will take Rees's Cyclopaedia at the price you mention, but I have not the means to purchase the Annals of Education. If you do not wish to sell all together, perhaps the "Memorandum Society," in the seminary, may purchase one set. It is now vacation, and those to whom the question would be referred are not here. The leading objects of the society are to preserve a history of its members, and a general history of the seminary. It is designed also to make it a means of individual improvement.

We are thinking of preparing a written catalogue, with various items attached to each name, as a part of the work of the Memorandum Society.[4]

This was the beginning of those valuable Mount Holyoke records which are the basis of the college archives. Miss Lyon's conviction of the perpetuity of the Seminary is shown in her organization of this society. "Its object," as one of the girls reports it in a home letter, "is to preserve various facts respecting the members. A payment of two dollars constitutes life membership, and each member is to write at least once in three years to the secretary, stating her residence, occupation and other facts. The society is to send her a copy of the annual catalogue of the institution and whatever documents it may publish itself." To this organization Miss Lyon made the prediction, when the girls looked their surprise at these plans for the future: "This institution is destined to exist thousands of years. . . . It is as likely that it will continue as that Amherst College will." She was forecasting, too, the modern alumnae directories of educational institutions.

Miss Grant went from her school to live in Dedham in the home that had been like her own for many years, that of Mrs. Briggs (Hannah Chickering of Saugus and Derry days). There she met a friend of Dr. Briggs, the Honorable William B. Banister, of Newburyport, a member of the Legislature, a man prominent in church and business circles and possessing considerable means. In August of 1841 she wrote to Miss Lyon announcing her impending marriage and inviting her to come to a quiet wedding at the home of Mrs. Briggs. We wonder a little that Mrs. Banister put into print in the memoir Miss Lyon's very non-committal reply in which she says: "To say that I was so deeply interested in its [the letter's] contents that

I could hardly sleep, would be saying but little. I have nothing to say on the subject, either good or bad. I have only to desire that this exceedingly important event may be for your own happiness and usefulness, for the happiness and usefulness of others, and also for the glory of God." [5]

The summer of 1840 was a serious one for Miss Lyon and all associated with the seminary. Almost immediately on their return to their homes for the summer vacation forty of the students were taken ill with what was called "typhus fever," and nine died. The circumstance caused much public comment and adverse criticism. It was thought that it would affect the numbers at the seminary the following year. Some did stay away, but others took their places so that there was a large enrolment. But while all discussed causes and sought to investigate conditions, Miss Lyon bore also the burden of the loss of these who were like her own daughters. That she carried herself strongly in this trial we can see from a letter to Dr. Rufus Anderson, president of the American Board, written November 5, 1840. We quote the extract referring to this subject.

We have commenced our year under trying circumstances, but a kind Providence has kept us from the evils we feared. There has been no excitement among any of the young ladies relative to the sickness. The only effect seems to be an inward conscientiousness, and a chastened state of feeling, which is favorable to cultivation of the intellect & the manners, as well as to their moral & religious improvement. In the number & standing of our higher classes, we feel the loss of those who have been sick or who have died, but our Junior class is the best we have ever had. We have a very full number.[6]

Family changes came in these years. Her sister Freelove died in October, her mother in December, 1840. These losses, following so soon after the deaths of her students, touched Miss Lyon deeply and brought her to a state where for a month or six weeks she had to give up meeting her classes. She even confesses in her letters to being unwell. In the early summer Deacon and Mrs. Safford took her with them on a trip to Niagara which quite restored her to her

usual health, though long before that she had resumed her full school and outside duties.

It would be pleasant, if we had space, to include a series of letters exchanged between Miss Lyon and Mrs. Sigourney, the "sweet singer of Hartford," writer, editor, and in her own fashion educator of girls and women. She had a young protegé at the seminary, for whom she sent occasional extra sums of money, and she gave some of her books to the library. She also visited the school when she could on the anniversary occasions, and had, it is evident, a great admiration for Miss Lyon.

XXXIII

SCHOOL CORRESPONDENCE

By necessity Miss Lyon carried on a voluminous correspondence on school matters, in some years with one of the girls as amanuensis, in other periods almost single-handed. She was apparently behindhand with it a good deal of the time, as her frequent apologies indicate. The letters written to her, now on file in the Mount Holyoke archives, indicate the variety of matters which it covered and show that the essential part of it, relating to admission of students, the business and domestic administration of the seminary, and the necessary contacts with the friends and patrons of the institution, was efficiently handled. Saturday, she says in a letter to Miss Grant, was her day for writing letters, but there was no day in the week that did not see her pen in action.

From a pile of routine letters written in answer to applications for admission, we select a few which throw light on the academic standards. Each application was considered with the utmost care. As the years went on, Miss Lyon was able to pick and choose according to previous training, and age and maturity of prospective students.

Two letters addressed to Miss Martha M. Green, Westmoreland, New Hampshire, are among the earliest.

South Hadley, Feb. 25, 1839.

Miss Green,

Dear Madam,

I have just received yours making application for the admission of two sisters the ensuing summer. I cannot give any encouragement that they could be received. If there should be failures but just before the term commences, would they be glad to come on a *very* short notice, and take the places vacated? If so please write immediately. State also, whether they would expect to continue longer than the ensuing summer.

Allow me to mention another subject. You have been mentioned to me as a lady who would be a valuable teacher in this seminary, and as one possessing an interest in behalf of the institution, and whose spirit would be congenial to the genius of the seminary. My plans are all completed for the present year. But I shall have some vacancies to fill the ensuing year. By what I have learned respecting yourself from more sources than one, I have felt rather desirous to know whether you were engaged for the next year, and also that you might become acquainted with the seminary, and that I might become acquainted with you before I made my arrangements for the next year, which I ought to do very soon. I have thought that on acquaintance I might regard it as a great favor to obtain your aid in building up this rising institution, which we trust will live and flourish generations after we are laid in our graves. I have thought, too, that you might find this a spot, and here a field of labor peculiarly suited to satisfy a benevolent heart. But as I regard it as of so much importance that our teachers should be able to cooperate with me, and with each other, I have thought not best to invite any one without a previous personal acquaintance. Since receiving yours, it has occurred to me, that, if you were at home, and at liberty, that possibly you might like to visit with us, and would value an intimate acquaintance with this seminary enough to compensate you for the time and expense of the journey. If so, I should be gratified to have you come and spend two or three weeks with us.

Our rooms are not all furnished, and we suffer great inconvenience from the necessity of borrowing furniture. It is comforting to have any one inquire after our interests in this respect. We hope the time is not far distant when we shall have an addition to our building, and it is exceedingly important that the rooms in this should be all furnished before that is done.

Sincerely yours,
Mary Lyon.[1]

South Hadley, March 29, 1839.

My dear Miss Green,

On the reception of your letter making the statement relative to the furniture, I decided to receive your sisters this spring, and wrote immediately, and also sent a catalogue. I mentioned that it might be well to bring with you bedding, towels, and a pair of pillows, and an under-bedtick for the room, and procure here the mattress, cabinet ware, etc. We purchased some of these heavier articles for the unfurnished rooms, and have not yet paid for them, as I thought that those who furnished rooms would prefer to take them from our hands, as they could thus obtain them at a lower price and without trouble. Of course you will do just as you please about this.

They are in want of a principal to take charge of a very important school in Northampton, called "The Girls' High School." It is a public free school, and is exerting a great influence on the cause of education. There are about 120 scholars, two assistants, and some assistant pupils. I think it a very important situation. I have taken the liberty to recommend yourself. If they write to you, I hope their letter will not fail of reaching you as mine did.

Our next term commences April 17, two weeks from next Wed.

Sincerely yours,

Mary Lyon.

I had none in my school who could be engaged this spring, whom I dare recommend for Northampton.[2]

The following is a typical letter to a would-be student.

South Hadley, March 9, 1839.

My dear Miss Hodges,

There are so many earlier applications than yours, that I fear it will be quite impossible to give you a place in the seminary. If it is possible, I will write again soon.

Respectfully yours,

Mary Lyon.

In all cases where an affirmative reply is sent to applicants, it is with the expectation that they will be ready for examination in all the preparatory studies on entrance.[3]

Examinations played a large part in the student life. There were not only these entrance examinations, which continued sometimes over a week or ten days until the teachers knew in what classes to place an accepted student, but there were examinations for the returning students for the like purpose of locating them to their best advantage. Miss Lyon specialized—in a manner which we of to-day are likely to think a very modern educational method—in individual attention, frequent personal tests, with resulting relocating of a student according to her rate of advancement. The records of teachers and pupils show short courses in the various subjects with frequent regrouping according to aptitude. The system was almost unbelievably flexible in a period when most schools and many colleges carried on set courses of study with promotion only according to dates in the academic year.

On this matter of examinations, students' comments show the other side of the story. A letter written by Sarah Brigham at the beginning of the second year (October 29, 1838) to Nancy Everett, who had been a student the preceding year but was at home, reads:

> "But what have we been doing, you will inquire?
>
> "Review & examination—review and examination have been the principal words and afforded the principal employment of both, teachers & pupils, since we came together. The plan of examining Miss Lyon proposed last term, has been adopted—Everyone is examined in all she studied during the last year—classes from ten to fifteen are formed and questioned till all the teachers, who are present, are satisfied, with regard to the amount of knowledge the scholar possesses of the study examined." [4]

The list of subjects in which examinations have been held follows: Sullivan's Political Class Book, Physiology, Blair and Newman's Rhetoric, Ancient Geography, Mental Philosophy, History, Chemistry, Astronomy, Euclid, Algebra, Grammar, also Ecclesiastical History,

Smellie's Philosophy of Natural History, and for the seniors Alexander's Evidences of Christianity. Chemistry is to begin the following week, a class in Milton within a week, and for all the seniors, when they have finished their reviews, Whately's Logic. By a plan resembling the modern collegiate system of major and minor subjects, Miss Lyon had her students carry two main subjects for a period, with several minor ones, then change to another group.

A letter of March 2, 1841, to Reverend William A. Hallock concerns the admittance of his niece who has been at Steubenville, Ohio, the daughter of missionaries in Smyrna.

South Hadley, Mar. 2, 1841.

Rev. Mr. Hallock,

Sir,

I have received yours making application for the admission of your niece into the seminary. I have great doubt what I ought to say on the subject. Our number for the next year is nearly filled out. Still I think we must receive her if it is best for her. Of this I have great doubt, after reading your frank description of her character. Our institution is adapted to scholars of great maturity. The instruction we give is general, insisting much on great principles, leaving those instructed to adapt & apply it to themselves. On scholars with the maturity of ours, I think the immediate practical effect quite as great, & the influence on their principles of action, & on their future character & conduct much greater than any other course. We give but little of that personal care, & that individual instruction so essential to the improvement of persons of but little maturity, & especially of those possessing prominent & radical defects to be rooted out. It is true we could give much attention to an individual. But then, if it is seen to be no part of the general system, it loses a great part of its influence. If she could be placed in a small family school for one year, under the care of a lady of just the right character & skill, it would be vastly better than for her to be in our seminary, I have no doubt. Perhaps it may be said of those who come here, that unto every one that hath it shall be given, & she shall have abundance, but

from her that hath not, shall be taken away even that she hath.

It is farther essential for her improvement here, that she be thoroughly prepared for admission. Without this preparation, she could not go on with profit with our scholars. With her character, this point would need special attention. She will be in danger of professing to be prepared when she cannot bear an examination.

I feel a deep interest in behalf of the child. I think we are all under great obligation to do all in our power for the improvement of the children of those parents, who have given themselves to labor for the good of this lost & dying world. On this account, I dare not say that we will not receive her. I sincerely hope that it will not be necessary that she should come next year. But if after looking at the objection, & after making suitable efforts to find a better place for her elsewhere, your judgment is still in favor of sending her, we will receive her at the commencement of our next year, & do the best for her that we can. If she comes, I hope she will be well acquainted with the preparatory studies before she leaves Steubenville. Miss Leach one of the teachers knows what preparation is necessary for admission here, & I doubt not that she would attend to it.

Please let me hear from you as soon as you have any thing farther to communicate.

Respectfully yours,
Mary Lyon.[5]

Letters and students' journals testify to the variety of Miss Lyon's teaching methods. She was always devising schemes for rousing and holding the interest of her classes. A letter written by Lucy Goodale to her young sister at home shows Miss Lyon taking especial care even in the spring of 1838, that busy first year, of her younger students.

". . . I must tell you a plan of Miss Lyon's. It is that those of us who are not sufficiently advanced to study botany should have a little book and write the names of all the flowers we find and think we shall remember. Then she wants us to

keep them in water in our rooms, and once a week she calls us all together and teaches us about them. First she holds up a flower and says all those who know its name may rise, then those who know the shape of the leaves such as ovate, lanceolate, and many more such things as you have in your little Botany. This is the way she says little children should study botany. She wants we should walk an hour each day. . . . This morning we ran down to the orchard a few minutes and found three or four, the first in our books. . . ."[6]

This letter to her old friends, Mr. and Mrs. Heard, speaks of the addition to the building which is shown in the accompanying picture. The small addition mentioned as needed to complete the design was not built. The fact of these plans, dating from the opening of the seminary, shows the far-sightedness of Miss Lyon and the trustees.

South Hadley, Dec. 3, 1841.

Mr. & Mrs. Heard,

Dear Friends,

I must first acknowledge my fault in not writing to you before. Your highly valued donation of books was duly received. It came about my return from a journey on account of my health. Our building was very soon to be given up to the carpenters, masons, & painters for some alterations, & universal repairs. My first neglect was to find a place to open the box before I wrote. Another cause of neglect has been a pressure of cares through the vacation & up to the present time greater than I ever experienced before. I have to regret the neglect & omission of many things which I did not forget. Thus much for apology. I have only to add that the books have arrived safely, & you have my sincere thanks.

We have a very valuable addition to our building. One small addition more will complete the design. When that will be done I know not. I suppose more than $50,000 has been expended already. For this the trustees are somewhat in debt, & something more must be expended in finishing. I want to have you come &

see us & our building & all about us very much. May we not depend on your coming at our next anniversary? I hope you will think of it & make your plans so as to be here.

I did hope that I should see you at Miss Grant's wedding. Can it be that she has already given up her name. I hope & trust that she will still be very useful & very happy. Have you seen her lately? She called here on her return home from her first journey. I have not heard directly from her since.

I have just heard from Mrs. Cowles. They have thought of leaving Elyria, but will not at present.

I do not know whether you consider your home now Ipswich or Boston. My health was not good the last year, but it is greatly improved. During the summer, I gave up almost all my cares to others. This I found a great benefit.

There is some religious interest in our school, now. I trust we shall have an interest in your prayers. I want to know more about your children as they grow up. Do let me hear from you.

Sincerely yours,
Mary Lyon.[7]

The addition to the building justified itself at once by increased numbers. Dr. Hitchcock gives the figures for the years as follows: in 1837-38, 116 pupils; 1838-39, 103; 1839-1840, 119; 1840-1841, 113; 1841-1842, 172; 1842-1843, 183; 1843-1844, 205; 1844-1845, 255.

A letter written by Miss Lyon to Dr. Rufus Anderson at the "Missionary Rooms" in Boston shows her at work again, even as in Buckland and Ashfield days, on the problem of keeping up interest in grammar.

South Hadley,
Mar. 11, 1842.

Rev. & dear Sir:

Will you allow me to have a few moments of your precious time. Our school is so large, that we think we must be very careful that no one escapes our notice, & passes through our course & is deficient in common improvement. As a kind of guide to

the teachers in grammar, & an aid to them in forming a uniform standard, I should occasionally like to give them a few pages all the same. It has just occurred to me that we might furnish ourselves with some religious tract or missionary paper. I should prefer the latter. For such an object, I should choose something containing elevated thoughts. But I never like to parse, analyse, or criticise the style of the Bible, or any human production treating of the most solemn & affecting religious truths. Will you send me a bundle directed to the care of Mr. J. Butler, Bookseller, Northampton, containing 150 copies of some missionary paper. If you have not so many of a kind, please send two or three kinds, of each an equal number. To test a young lady's skill in dissecting & analysing our language, I rather prefer the more complicated sentences found in some of the first writers of the last century, to the beautifully simple style, & *short* sentences, of which Prof. B.B. Edwards is a fine example. Send such as you have, however.

Much love to Mrs. A.

Present your bill to Dea. Safford, & request him to pay it, & charge the same to my account.

Respectfully yours,
Mary Lyon.

If I use these papers at all, we want to use them in about a week.[8]

XXXIV

THE REVIVAL OF 1843

The revival of the winter of 1843 at Mount Holyoke Seminary was unusually intense and powerful. Always Miss Lyon and her fellow-teachers felt that there should be a revival in the school each year; and there were, according to her biographers, eleven such revivals during her twelve-year period of leadership. This particular one is, however, of special interest, first, because of its connections with happenings in the religious and missionary world of the time, and, second, because we have in letters and other records an intimate account of it as it transpired from day to day, a record from three sources, at least, which is unusual in any revival record of the period. The events leading up to it have such close bearing on Miss Lyon's life, as reflected in the letters of the time and in correspondence of later years, that they deserve our attention.

The sense of need of this particular revival started in Miss Lyon's mind at the American Board meeting in Norwich, Connecticut, in the fall of 1842. To the stimulus of the American Board in her personal life, she always paid high tribute. Returning from the Norwich meeting she spoke of it to her girls.

> Some of the brightest visions of my childhood are of Carey and those who first carried the gospel to the heathen. . . . I well remember the time when the name of Mills and his associates began to fall on my ear; I remember the thoughts of my young heart when the subject of foreign missions first began to find its way into the family circle, and to be spoken of as one of the marvelous things of the age. I delight to go over the history of the A.B.C.F.M. [American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions], the first, the corner stone of our voluntary benevolent associations. I love the very thought that I can remember the beginnings of this glorious enterprise. I beheld the infant rocked in its cradle. I knew not why it was born or wherefore it was

there. I have seen it grow, become endowed with understanding, and give laws to other minds and directions to other powers. I remember well my feelings when I heard in my early home that our first missionaries had sailed from Philadelphia and Salem. I honored the spirit that led them forth, reverenced the God they served, and asked, shall I ever be in fuller sympathy with him and with them? Years passed by; and one (Rev. Pliny Fisk) went from my native hills, saying, with Paul, "Behold, I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there." A tenderer chord was now touched; for I had begun to love my Savior, and my spirit went forth with him to Jerusalem.[1]

Three periods of unusual intensity in the religious life of New England are noted in ecclesiastical history. The first was the Great Awakening, under Reverend Jonathan Edwards and the famous English evangelist, George Whitefield, beginning in 1734 at Northampton, Massachusetts. Dartmouth and Princeton Colleges trace their beginnings to movements which started in this revival period. The second peak of religious and evangelistic fervor came at about the turn of the century, following a period low in morality and religion at the close of the American and French Revolutions. Out of this period came the great missionary movements of Mary Lyon's childhood, to which she refers in this talk to her girls. From the Haystack Meeting at Williams College in 1806, Samuel Mills and a group of young college students went out with the watchword, "We Can If We Will," to move in their churches for the evangelization of the world. At Andover the Williams group met Adoniram Judson from Brown College, Samuel Newell from Harvard, and other equally enthusiastic students. To meet their urgent offering of themselves for service on the foreign field came the organization at Bradford, Massachusetts, of the American Board, in 1810. At that meeting Adoniram Judson was entertained in the home of Deacon John Hasseltine, whose daughter Rebecca married Reverend Joseph Emerson and helped him carry on the Byfield school. Young Judson found in a younger sister, Nancy, a spirit of devotion corresponding with his own. They were married and sailed in 1812 from Salem, Massachusetts, for Calcutta, while young Newell and his bride, Harriet

Atwood, Nancy's intimate friend, went out on a boat that sailed from Philadelphia. These are the missionaries to whom Mary Lyon refers above. Pliny Fisk went out to Jerusalem as a pioneer there and died in Beirut in 1825. In this period came, too, the organization of Baptist and Methodist Foreign Mission Boards (in 1814 and 1819), of the New England Tract Society which became the American Tract Society in 1823, and of the American Bible Society. "From the glowing heart," says Dr. Josiah Strong, "of a religious revival whose warmth cleared away the fogs of infidelity, revived Christianity, founded Andover Seminary, and built Park Street Church, came also this first foreign missionary society of America," the American Board.[2]

The third revival period was coincident, by dates, with Mary Lyon's teaching life, with marked increases in intensity in 1833 and again in the early 1840's. Among its leaders were Charles G. Finney, a noted revivalist who began his work in New York State and came East into Connecticut and finally into Massachusetts, Dr. Lyman Beecher, preaching from his Boston pulpit, and Edward Norris Kirk, who came to Boston in 1842, staying in the home of Deacon Safford and becoming through his efforts and those of others the pastor of a new church, the Mount Vernon Church, which like Mount Holyoke Seminary had a strong impetus towards its inception in the Safford parlor.[3] Miss Lyon wrote to her mother in 1833 of attending special meetings at Park Street Church, and to Miss Grant that spring of seeing missionaries sail from Boston. These missionary contacts increased with the years, and reached a climax at this American Board meeting in 1842, when Miss Lyon gathered her former pupils who were likewise in attendance in Norwich at what has been referred to as the "first alumnae meeting of the Seminary" and told them that she felt Mount Holyoke had been founded in part by gifts which might otherwise have gone to missionary causes, had she not diverted them to this purpose.[4]

The year 1842 was meanwhile being marked by the "Great Boston Revival," reported as "one of the most remarkable spiritual quickenings in all the annals of American revivals," with more than four thousand persons added to the churches.[5] Yet in December of that year Miss Lyon was writing Mrs. Banister of lack of interest in spiritual things at the Seminary. She speaks first of her sympathy and sense of personal loss in the death of Mrs. Burgess, Mary Grant, Mrs. Banister's niece, who had been one of Miss Lyon's pupils at

Buckland, had married Reverend Ebenezer Burgess and gone out as a missionary to India. She then continues:

We have had a very prosperous year in worldly things. Every thing is systematized, and Miss M. [Moore] and Miss W. [Whitman] urge forward the wheels so beautifully that all seems more than ever like clockwork. I enjoy very much having every thing done better by others than it can be by myself. If this pleasure continues to increase as it has done for a year or two, I hope I may be prepared to be happy in being old, and being laid aside as a useless thing. But in spiritual things we are less favored. There has been less interest than we have had any year since the first. Pray for us, that we may not receive all our good things in this life.[6]

The change came, but in a way which Miss Lyon did not expect. Early in January she addressed the school on missionary interest and giving. A few days later she reported to them that she had received a letter requesting two teachers for Persia, where Reverend and Mrs. Justin Perkins had been working for nearly ten years among the Nestorian Christians, an ancient sect which had fallen into poverty and a low state of religious belief.[7] She asked whether any felt the call to go, and received within an hour a response from one of her ablest teachers, Fidelia Fisk, niece of Pliny Fisk. During the next six weeks, according to Miss Fisk's testimony in her "Recollections of Mary Lyon," Miss Lyon gave herself in interest and time as if Miss Fisk were her daughter or sister, as indeed she felt she was. On March 1st Miss Fisk sailed. Miss Lyon went to Boston to see her off and stayed for a week's visit with Deacon and Mrs. Safford, who had been, with their guest and pastor Mr. Kirk, in the very heart of the Boston revival.

On her return to South Hadley, so the record runs, she arrived just at the time of the afternoon exercises in the seminary hall. She had said to Miss Fisk as she left her at the boat, "You will pray for us—will you not?—all the way to Persia." She gave her girls the particulars of the departure of their teacher and closed by saying, "Young ladies, you have one less to labor with you; but, I trust, none the less to pray for you." She went from the seminary hall to gather her teachers around her. From that meeting the teachers "went to

their rooms in silence with the feeling that their work was alone with God." The next day, one tells, was recreation day, and the very silence of the house filled them with awe.[8] Wednesday, March 8th, she took time to write of the situation to Mrs. Banister.

South Hadley, March 8, 1843.

My dear Mrs. B.:

I have been absent a short time, and on my return yesterday found your two letters. You ask about the spiritual interests of our school. I was just thinking of writing to you on this very subject, that I might beseech your prayers at this time, for it is one of great darkness, of anxiety, of hope, of fear. In temporal things we have been greatly blessed. We have a much greater supply of teachers than usual. Misses M. and W. [Moore and Whitman] have applied their minds closely to reducing everything under their control to the most beautiful order and symmetry, and with great success. Our young ladies are very youthful, more and more so, every year; but there is so much docility, such a sweet atmosphere all around, that I feel, from day to day, that our home is a sweet home. There is more missionary interest than usual, and more desire among some Christians to be prepared for the service of God. But, alas! one thing is lacking—the direct and powerful influence of the Holy Spirit. A few gentle drops have descended, but we have enjoyed no plentiful shower, and this we greatly need. According to all former experience, the harvest time for this year will be past in four or five weeks. Then will come the finishing up of the term and the spring examinations. After that will follow the short summer term, a most favorable time for fixing last impressions, for attempting to lead Christians into green and living pastures, but not a favorable time for the work of the Holy Spirit in breaking up the fallow ground by conviction and conversion. Nearly sixty of our number are without hope. As teachers, as Christians, as an institution, we greatly need the effects of a powerful revival. I fear to make any effort; I fear to omit it. I know not what to do. The way seems greatly hedged up. . . .

I went to Boston to help fit off one of our teachers as a missionary to the Nestorians. I made arrangements to be absent a few days longer, that I might have time to look over our sad, very sad state, and that I might inquire of the Lord a right path in which to walk. I wanted exceedingly to go to N. [Norton] and also to M. [Monson] on my way home; but I thought it my duty to stay in one place to make no calls, to do but a little business, and only attend meetings as I could. I have seldom had so profitable a week, when I have had so much physical and mental rest, and so much, as I hope, of spiritual refreshing. I have been greatly interested in examining the subject of prayer. Since I returned, a few more drops have fallen. But how so great a work can be done in so short a time I know not. All is yet darkness, but I hope and trust that light will shine out of darkness.

Now, I have one urgent request to make of you. It is, that you would set apart a little time every day to pray in sincerity and in truth for us. Pray that God would, in his own way, do a great work here, and give us a great blessing. Pray that we may be taught what the Lord would have us do. Will you thus pray every day till you hear from us again, which shall be soon? For a few days, I design to study daily two passages of Scripture, praying that I may be led by the Spirit to receive into the understanding and heart just what the Holy Ghost has revealed in these wonderful passages—Luke xi. 5-13, James i; 5-8. Would you like to study these daily with me, as you pray for us? [9]

The next morning, Thursday, Miss Lyon met the school as usual for worship and told them that she was staying away from them that she might have an uninterrupted opportunity to think of the religious state of her family, and asked them to pray with her that they might not separate for the spring vacation without a rich blessing. From that meeting she went to her room to write to Mrs. Safford.

South Hadley, March 9, 1843.

My dear Mrs. Safford:

As I have a little business on which I must write this morning,

I will take this opportunity to say a few things on the subject so near my heart. On my return, I found things in some respects a little more favorable than when I left. The general seriousness has increased somewhat, and considerably in one small section under the care of one teacher. The teachers have had some increase of interest, and are making some new efforts in their sections. Among those who have most of a heart for such a work there is a conviction of the need of a thorough, powerful revival, to break up the fallow ground, to give a new current to thought and feeling among the younger and least experienced Christians, among the coldest, most lukewarm, and most backward professors, and among those who stand on middle ground. Thursday morning is one of the three mornings in the week when I reserve a half hour for religious instruction and devotional exercises. I have just met the pupils in the hall. I took occasion to spread out before them our present position, with our necessity, our danger, our fear, and our hope, mingling all along my own feelings, my own solemn convictions of the urgency of the case. I stated my own views, that some thing must be done, though entire darkness spread over the path of duty. I told them that a little while ago I came to them to ask of them a missionary. I would not go from one to another, lest I should not find the best. And the Lord so stirred up the willing hearts that we all believed that we had sent the one whom he had called and qualified for the work. And now I came to ask for a willing heart to unite with me in prayer for this great thing, as this seemed our last refuge.

The scene was very interesting to my feelings. How I should love to have had you with us, to mingle in our sympathies and prayers! There was a very tender spirit this morning, an atmosphere in which it was very easy to breathe and to speak too. Probably little circumstances might have some effect. It is so seldom that I leave this beloved household for a single day, that my meeting them after an absence of only a week and a half is suited to awaken some tender emotions on both sides. Such things are the veriest trifles in themselves; but my sentiment is,

that the most trifling circumstances should be used for the same great end. With regard to efforts for the impenitent, all is dark. But amidst the darkness, and with a burden on my heart which I cannot describe, there is something in my soul which seems like trust in God, that is like a peaceful river, overflowing all its banks. Light can shine out of darkness, and I have great hope that we shall receive a blessing, whether or not the providence of God shall permit Mr. Kirk to come and share with us in our labors, our joys, and our sorrows.

I have increasing views of the importance of a whole work of the Spirit, a universal work, one which shall reach our whole church of more than one hundred, all young. You recollect Mr. Kirk's vivid description of the difference between passing through the deep valley and rising up into a revival, and leaping immediately into the sympathies of a revival. We need experience of his first to fit us for the varied and important duties of the year. On this account, I have some query whether it may not be better that Mr. Kirk's visit should be deferred a little longer. If he could stay two or three full weeks, I would as soon that he come to-day as ever. But if he cannot stay but one week, and possibly even less, it is very important that he come at the right time, and expend his power in the best way. His fear that he could not stay long enough is my great fear. It seems to me like a very desirable thing that certain minds, certain difficult cases, should come under the influence of a powerful mind and warm heart, like Mr. Kirk's, and we all need some stirring means; but my own will has ever been graciously kept in an even balance concerning this thing. I am prepared to rejoice or to acquiesce as soon as the will of the Lord shall be made known.

Now, whatever may be in relation to these things, let me ask and beseech you three, my dear sympathizing friends, [Dea. and Mrs. Safford and Dr. Kirk] to grant me one petition. Will you every day offer a short prayer in our behalf, which shall arise from your inmost heart, till you hear from me again, which shall be soon? Only ask God, our heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus, our blessed Redeemer, and you shall have your request.[10]

Apparently Mr. Kirk did not come, but the revival continued under Miss Lyon and her teachers. "The Sabbath," writes one of the students in a later account of this period to which all looked back in after years, "was a day of interest, and when Miss Lyon invited those who had indulged hope since the commencement of the school year to meet her, fourteen came together. She rejoiced over them, but the burden of her cry was for those out of the ark of safety." Monday afternoon she was "partially laid aside from labor" with a cold, but continued to meet the "anxious" daily. The next letter to Mrs. Safford is written a week later by Miss Whitman. Miss Lyon has requested her to write, as she is quite unwell with a cold and thinks it her duty to reserve her strength for the religious exercises of the school. "To-day," she reports, "she is rather better than yesterday, yet I have some fears that she may have a fever. The physician was yesterday somewhat apprehensive of a lung fever. Should she remain entirely quiet, it would undoubtedly do much towards a restoration; but as the present religious state of the school is, this seems difficult."

Miss Whitman feels that they are approaching a very important crisis, and asks for prayers for the teachers as "leaders of the flock." The meetings have been increased; the regular recess meetings are largely attended, and have been occasionally lengthened, and a daily sectional meeting of half an hour has been added from the recreation hours, being the time usually devoted to reading. "Since her return," she concludes, "Miss Lyon has been giving some connected instruction upon the subject of prayer. It will indeed be a mysterious providence should she now be unable to speak to us."

That "providence" did not eventuate. The very next day Miss Lyon is writing herself to Deacon Safford.

Friday Morning, March 17, 1843.

Dear Sir:

The present state of our school is exceedingly critical. May you have a mind and heart to pray for us. The testimony from every source—from the teachers, from the prayer meetings, from meeting for the impenitent, from individual conversations among Christians and among the impenitent—is all the same, proving beyond doubt that the Spirit of God is moving with a

gentle influence on the face of the waters. Still, there is not that point and decision which must be attained, or we shall fail of the blessing. The great and distressing doubt which rested on my mind of using any extra means myself has, in the providence of God, been somewhat removed. That interesting state on many things, such as missions, the general path of duty, &c., seems now changing to an increasing desire for the direct and special influences of the Holy Spirit.

Our regular business goes forward just as usual, but many have been looking up their leisure time for religion. The teachers are most of them very much engaged in gathering up the fragments of time, that nothing be lost. I have had a very short meeting for the impenitent every day. I have been able to meet all my appointments, though sometimes I have concentrated all the strength of three or four hours into half an hour. Every thing I do is such a privilege. . . .

It is so difficult for me to stop writing! My heart is so full! But I fear you cannot read this. If not, let it go as of no great importance.[11]

To Mrs. Safford she writes a few days later on the same line:

Our studies go forward, as usual, with all their regularity our family duties with all accustomed order. But we feel that we can and ought to turn aside from other sources of social improvement and enjoyment, that all the fragments of time may be gathered up and devoted to the great and grand business of seeking a divine blessing to descend on all this family. The teachers are all of one mind and one heart in this thing. We use our fragments of time just when they happen to come, and just for the object for which they seem at the time to be most needed. . . . My lungs have not allowed me the privilege of individual conversation, but the teachers and others are instant in season and out of season.[12]

There our intimate day-to-day following of this matter ends. The result is summarized on April 13, hardly more than two weeks

later, at the close of a business letter to Mrs. Banister. All but six have expressed some hope, thirty coming in within a single week. Then comes a lovely paragraph, special in revival records for its gentleness and for its method of following up the work.

In all my privileged experience connected with the work of the Spirit, this, I think, has been of unparalleled rapidity; and yet I have never witnessed more quietness and stillness than in its progress, or any less of what some call *reaction* to be watched against in the result. It has seemed like a sudden, powerful shower, bursting upon us, but descending with so much gentleness that not a leaf or twig among the tender plants is turned out of its place, and then so suddenly giving way to the beautiful sun and refreshing dews. But as teachers, we have a great work to cherish these tender plants. Shall we not have your prayers? O, to follow Christ in the work of cherishing them is what I want. This desire enters almost daily into the very depths of my soul with an untold and unwonted strength.[13]

To conclude this revival story it is good to have the testimony of Dr. Hitchcock of Amherst, who as trustee and also as lecturer on scientific subjects, was continually in and out of the seminary during these years. In his own portion of the memoirs he says:

"Some would imagine . . . that, to secure such an almost uninterrupted series of spiritual blessings, . . . extraordinary and peculiar means must have been employed. But nothing of this kind has ever been done. A person might live for weeks in the seminary, during one of these revivals, and yet see nothing unusual, save a deep solemnity and tenderness during religious exercises. Those exercises would not be much multiplied, nor would the literary exercises be suspended or diminished, unless in individual cases of deep seriousness. Both teachers and pupils would seem to be deeply engrossed in their studies, and would be, in fact, during the hours appropriated to study. Nor would the subject of religion be obtrud-

ed upon the visitor, or introduced, unless he manifested an unusual interest in the state of the school.[14]

An aftermath of this revival, following so close upon it as to be almost a part of it in Miss Lyon's personal life, was her little book "A Missionary Offering," which she began within a month of its close. A group of letters in the files of the American Board covers its history, as she submits the manuscript to Dr. Anderson and its possible publication is discussed. To Miss Fisk in Persia she writes nearly a year later (March 4, 1844) telling how she happened to write it.

You may inquire [writes Miss Lyon] how I found time to write a letter long enough to make a book. The truth is, that my spirit was so stirred, and my heart so burdened, that I wrote as fast as possible, without inquiring how I wrote, or whether I had time to write. In the month of April, the scenes of the revival, the prospect of our next missionary subscription, the falling off of the missionary receipts, all combined to give me an unusual current of emotions in view of certain subjects. I was preparing a connected series of topics to present to the school, the substance of which you will find, to some extent, in the first three and last two chapters. I had just commenced before the monthly concert in May, to which reference is made. After reading the affecting circular, which I heard with deepest interest, in behalf of all our school, Mr. Condit invited a young minister, just beginning preaching, to make some remarks. To Mr. Condit's disappointment, and my distress, instead of following out the subject, he just attempted to make some strictures on our missionary operations, alluding to slavery, and speaking of the want of economy at some of our stations. The defect of the young man was more in the head than in the heart. All agreed that his remarks were, at least, ill-timed. But, among other results, they gave rise to the little book. It was scarcely two days before most of the materials were gathered together. They soon assumed a visible and tangible form, merely as a relief to the internal spirit. This much for this little circumstance. . . .[15]

There is something refreshing about this picture of Mary Lyon's being so roused to righteous indignation by the utterances of a young minister as to go home and write a book. When she sent the manuscript to Dr. Anderson, she admitted its emotional origin. "The truth is," she says, "that what I have written is all *feeling* instead of thoughts. Feelings put into language do not make a very good appearance, and it is impossible for the writer to give any opinion on what is written." [16] She wished the booklet, if published to be anonymous. The book itself is a plea for giving based on theological arguments which are long since outworn, but we owe to it the picture of Miss Lyon's mountain home quoted in our first chapter. It was her only venture into print, save as she planned publicity for the seminary, but what seasoned author could present more vividly his or her sensations on submitting a manuscript to a publisher for criticism and decision than does she in a letter (June 5, 1843) to Dr. Anderson?

Every one who is foolish enough to write his own heart down on paper, always imagines that the picture of himself will find a likeness in some other heart, & in his view it is vastly important that *that* other heart should have the benefit of communing with its own likeness. But it is the last thing on which the writer should venture a judgment. So it is with me, & I seem thrown into a dilemma.[17]

XXXV

IN THE LAST YEARS

Letters multiply in our files as we near the close of Mary Lyon's life. The interest is in their number and variety as much as because of the individual contribution which each makes. Miss Lyon had become a public person, a well-known educator, with all the calls upon her which such a position and reputation entailed.

Many letters come from older girls, young teachers who write to inquire if by a year of study at Mount Holyoke Seminary they can fit themselves to teach special subjects in their schools. Miss Lyon writes back sympathetically and definitely about the training they can get in calisthenics or music or whatever they want to study. Another group of letters shows her refusing younger applicants and repeating again and again the word as to the need for maturity before admission to the seminary. She had brought the seminary to the point where it paralleled the college age for young men as well as matched the college in many of its studies. On this point there is the story, told in a footnote of the memoir by Dr. Hitchcock of an interchange between two college presidents—perhaps, we venture to surmise, himself and Dr. Mark Hopkins, when the latter gave the anniversary address in 1840.

> "At one of the examinations," writes Dr. Hitchcock, "when the senior class had just recited to Miss Lyon in Butler's Analogy, we happened to overhear the conversation between two presidents of colleges who were on the platform. Says one of them, 'How is it that these young ladies recite in Butler so much better than our senior classes?' 'I do not know,' was the reply, 'unless it be that they have a better teacher.' "[1]

Requests for teachers made up a large part of Miss Lyon's weekly mail, and she gave much of her time to meeting this need. It was not a new need to her, not so new as to those who had been startled into action by the report in 1833 in the *American Annals of Education*[2] of

nearly a million and a half children growing up in the United States without benefit of schooling. Mary Lyon was always ahead of her times. Back in 1830 she had been studying with her Buckland girls in their geography class the needs of the country, with the practical question as to what could be done to meet them, and what their own duty was in the matter.[3] So while others knew these educational problems chiefly in the large, she and Miss Grant had intimate connection with them through graduates of their schools who were teaching in one-room schoolhouses or private homes all through the West.

Miss Lyon saw the emphasis shift during the period of her own teaching days from the plea for "female education" to the broader appeal for popular education. Mr. Emerson, at Byfield and Saugus, was making impassioned pleas for the higher education of young women, and urging that they be considered as desirable teachers for young children. In the 1840's Miss Lyon's problem was to supply enough teachers from her student ranks to meet a succession of appeals from New Jersey, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and the South, as well as the New England states. Presumably she came to feel in the 1840's somewhat as Miss Beecher did about this matter of "female" advancement.

> "Inasmuch, then," writes Miss Beecher in her *Educational Reminiscences,* published in book form in 1851, "as popular education was the topic which was every day rising in interest and importance, it seemed to me, that to fall into this current, and organize our sex, as women, to secure the proper education of the destitute children of our land was the better form for presenting the object, rather than to start it as an effort for the elevation of women." [4]

Miss Beecher was trying in 1846 to bring groups of young lady teachers to the West, with Cincinnati as a clearing house whence she might dispatch them to points where they were most needed.[5] She wrote to Miss Lyon asking her to send some of her girls for such placing. Miss Lyon's reply is calm and practical.

My dear Friend:

I have not forgotten you or your cause. I have received your

circular, and now, with little time at command, I send in a few inquiries and suggestions.

This object is a very great one and I hope it will accomplish for our country even more than any one could expect. Of the need of such an effort no one can doubt, and there are a *great many* women who have the heart to go and labor and suffer in the cause and receive but little earthly reward. But it is something to find them, and when found, still more to complete all needed negotiations.

But my hope is not in women considerably advanced in age, who expect to remain unmarried; it is in young ladies scarcely out of their teens, whose souls are burning for some channel into which they can pour their benevolence, and who will teach two, three, or four years and then marry and become firm pillars to hold up their successors. If we could find teachers who, unmarried, would devote twenty or thirty years to this work, we would not gain as much as by such a circulating system.

As to the other sex, I regard them in a different light. They need not (like women teachers) leave their vocation when they marry, in order "to guide the house" and nurture their children. And so God has given them *less versatility,* and less power to enter successfully and *all at once* into what they undertake as their life work.

In this view of the case there is a difficulty as to my immediate success in furnishing teachers for your enterprize. For young ladies must not only be willing to go, but must also gain the approbation of father, mother, or, perhaps, brother or sister, or sister's husband.

As the enterprise now is, it will be difficult to satisfy *very careful friends.* Just write to me of a particular place by name and that a teacher can have proper assurance of her paying expenses and a salary of say only $100, and I have little doubt that I can send you a good teacher with full consent of her friends *as soon as I can find a safe escort.*

But if I can only say I wish to send a teacher to Miss Beecher to spend a few weeks at Cincinnati in preparing for an unknown

field with an unknown salary, and to be under obligation to an unknown donor, the case is different.

You will not understand that I disapprove your mode of *commencing* your work. After your enterprise has made farther advance I hope to do more than I can do now. You will excuse me if my suggestions are borrowed from my own experience the last ten years. Having had many obstacles thrown in my own way, I anticipate them for others, and having been blessed with more success than I ever hoped, I am prepared to expect success for others as I do for you.[6]

It is an interesting forecast that Miss Lyon makes of a "circulating system" of young teachers who will spend two or three years in this field and then marry and "become firm pillars to hold up their successors." The idea presented more difficulties in those days than it does now because of the social handicaps under which women labored. The problem of the social status in a community of the young unmarried teacher was one with which Miss Lyon had frequently to grapple. She met a similar problem as her teachers turned their eyes towards foreign mission fields. In letters written at the time when Mr. Perkins of Persia was asking her to supply two teachers for the work which Miss Fisk decided to take on, Miss Lyon enters by correspondence into discussion of that matter with Dr. Rufus Anderson of the American Board. Her feeling is that it is unwise for women to go to these remote posts unmarried. Yet she is willing to be convinced to the contrary, and defers to the views of those who know more about it than does she.[7] As to the difficulties in this country, she expresses herself upon them in a letter written to Reverend Allen Henry Brown, a minister in southern New Jersey.

South Hadley, Nov. 8, 1847

Mr. Brown,

Sir,

Through a multitude of unusually urgent duties and a doubt what to write, I have delayed writing to you longer than I ought. I am very much interested in your general object. For such destitute regions as you refer to, I think there may often be found female teachers with the needed benevolence and self-denying

spirit, and yet very much is necessary to prepare the way in all such cases. Ladies cannot go out alone and unprotected like gentlemen. They can work as hard and with no more in return, and perhaps less, but they must have a home and counsellors and definite work laid out for their hands. There have been some cases, where ladies have been sent out with too little definiteness and have been expected too much to lay out their work for themselves. This I have no doubt that you will look after. Reports have come to me that Miss Boughen's operations are defective in the particular to which I have referred. I hope the report has no good foundation for my heart has been greatly interested in her work, and labor of love to which she has given herself so zealously and so disinterestedly and some upon whom I look almost as my own dear children I have encouraged to go out under her banner.

Among those educated here have been many who have been ready to give their lives for the good of others both in foreign lands and in our own country. I trust that the Son will still send us those who will be ready for any work to which they shall be called in Divine Providence.

Yours with most respect,
Mary Lyon[8]

The glimpses which some of these letters of the period from 1843 to 1849 give of Miss Lyon's life in the school show her busy about her usual circle of activities. She admits in the autumn of 1843 in a letter to Mrs. Safford that she must take more care of her health.

South Hadley, September 26, 1843.

I think I shall like the plan . . . very much, as I am very partial to any thing which will relieve me of care. The thought of giving instruction to so many minds brings with it an increasing anxiety. For this I must reserve all the mental and moral strength which I can. I must not depend on the impulse of the moment, and on the united strength of the occasion, so much as I have done the last six years. When I think of the sudden and

strong transitions of mind and heart which I have often been obliged to make, I feel that I can never do it again; and even if I could do it, I could not sustain the shock many times more.

I have taken a health excursion among the hills about forty miles distant, and just returned quite invigorated. I have a good old aunt among the hills.* Her home is in the highest, and wildest, and roughest place which I ever visit. She is the last remnant of the old stock, the liveliest image of my dear mother. I always find the ride to her mountain home, and the communing with her on former days, very sweet.[9]

Lucy Lyon, Aaron's daughter, who was teaching at the seminary that year, tells in the seminary journal (a running account of current events kept for the benefit of Holyoke daughters on the mission field, and mailed to them periodically) of that journey—of how "aunt and I hired a horse and carriage, & set out on an excursion to Franklin Co."

A letter of July 23, 1845, tells of the building being struck by lightning, though with only slight damage because of the speedy putting out of the fire thus started in a closet.[10] One written September 1 of that same year, shows her away "on a journey endeavoring to gain a little more strength." [11]

A letter written by Miss Lyon to her niece, Abigail Moore, August 24, 1846, contains the confession of a physical condition mentioned in the Seminary Journal. "I want some one to talk for me. I am so deaf." [12] Increasing deafness was a heavy trial and handicap in the last years of Miss Lyon's life. The letter mentions also that this will be her last visit with this favorite niece who had been with her as assistant and then associate all the years at South Hadley. Abigail was to be married to Reverend Ebenezer Burgess [13] and sail for India September 26, 1846. That same month Lucy Lyon, who had also been with Miss Lyon at Mount Holyoke as teacher and assistant, married Reverend Edward C. Lord, a missionary to China, and by the first of the next year she had sailed for their mission station. In late November Miss Lyon admits to Mrs. Banister that she is still in poor health and that she misses her two nieces very much. "I feel the loss socially," she says, "more than in our business, though they

* Mrs. Seth Purington.

were both very important to the school." [14] A letter of the spring of 1847 comments seriously on the fact that she has lived half a century. "How few my remaining days," she says; and appears to have felt this to be true. Yet by spring she has recovered from the low state of health of the winter and seems for the next two years to be uncommonly active in the conduct of the seminary.

The few letters to Abigail, who had been like a daughter to her for nine years of seminary life, are intimate family epistles, with references to one relative and another. One of April 19, 1847, shows Miss Lyon to be at Monson with Mrs. Porter. Of this visit she writes:

". . . I have been here but once before since you left the country, which was about 7 weeks ago. So you see I am a great keeper at home. I have spent one night at Dr. Hitchcock's. Besides this I do not remember that I have spent a night away from home since you left us, & scarcely an hour except half a day on the Sabbath, & sometimes I have not been able to go out even for that. . . . Prof. Snell of Amherst has consented to render us a little aid about our philosophics department. He has been twice to look over the apparatus. He is to meet me in Boston this week. I have in my trunk all he thought necessary to repair, & we hope to make considerable additions. When that is done we hope he will come over once or twice a week & give us experiments. I want to have Miss Whitman take the department of Nat. Philosophy, but she is very reluctant to try with all her other cares unless Prof. Snell can come.

My health has not been good this winter but is better now. I have many things to make me remember that my home is not a permanent one here. Last year how many of my kindred were around me. Now all are away but Rosina [Lucy Lyon's younger sister.] But I have no regret. I am altogether reconciled to your going & to Lucy's. The remembrance of the years you both spent with me is sweet. The communion with your hearts is still sweet, & especially our meeting around the mercy seat. . . .[16]

Next she is writing to Susan Tolman and Martha Scott, both of the class of 1845, concerning a reunion of the classes of 1844 and 1845

which was to take place at the anniversary in 1847. Here we see Miss Lyon making preparations for the first of that ever-lengthening series of alumnae reunions to which Mount Holyoke has ever since summoned her daughters.

My dear Miss Tolman & Scott,

I understand that your class have an appointment to meet here at our coming anniversary. Will you have the goodness to write to each individual and give her an invitation from me to meet this appointment. It will probably be difficult for them to be accommodated in the neighborhood. I think we can put some of our large rooms in requisition for the occasion for sleeping rooms, and can give them about as good accommodations as some of our Holyoke friends who go to a new country to teach may find on their way and for a short time after their arrival. If they will accept of such accommodations we shall be very glad to receive them to our house and to their former homes. We may not be able to accommodate over night those who have husbands. But we hope that such will not fail to come and their *husbands* too. We have no doubt but that we can contrive in the case so that they will find a resting place somewhere. They will all recollect our firm principle not to incommode our own present family who must bear the burden and heat of the day in going through their reviews and examinations and in doing up the business of the year.

Affectionately yours,
Mary Lyon.[17]

Nearly forty from the two classes attended the reunion, and as they departed Miss Lyon invited them to hold another reunion ten years later.

Another letter to her "very dear Niece," Abigail (Mrs. Burgess in Ahmednuggur, India), is begun at Somers, Connecticut, where she is visiting with Seminary friends. She has come there immediately after the anniversary, and comments on that fact:

. . . You know how exhausted I am at the close of the anni-

versary, & how difficult I find it to sleep the last two or three weeks. So just before Mary left, it occurred to me that it would be a good plan for me to go home with Mary & rest & make up my sleep. Without waiting to see whether I could or not, I put the thought into requisition. This is the best place I could have had for rest. It is so quiet—so peaceful—the air so pure & fresh, you are so surrounded with kind faces & kind hearts. It is so good to rest the first thing. I shall want to do just so next year.

New Marlborough, Sept. 4. It is good time & place just here to add a little to this letter, which I shall send along by & by. Here I am where I have come from time to time to visit for 30 years. Here is the place of your birth,* the place of so much interest to your dear mother & my dear aunt.

Last Monday, Cousin Cyrus, came with two horses & a very convenient & comfortable carriage to South Hadley for Rosina & myself. Tues. we had a delightful ride over the hills, & among the valies (*sic*), & between the rocks, till we arrived at this very house, & at this very spot, of which I have had such vivid conceptions in my childish days, when the houses & homes of uncles & friends form no unimportant part of the geographical literature. On Tues. Cousin Lovell carried me around for a ride. We made Achsah Wheeler & his parents a little visit, & took dinner with them. Thence we went down to Sandisfield & visited the grave of my dear aunt, & her daughter Cheney went into the old church (now unoccupied) where uncle Hartwell used to preach, & into the very pew where that dear aunt sat so many years. We found too, a daughter of Cousin Cheney's, Mrs. Twing, who seemed very much pleased that I should take so much pains to go to see her. We returned at night delighted, but fatigued. The next day Wed. Cousin Lovell & his wife & Rosina & myself started in the great two horse carriage for New Lebanon, to carry out our cousining.

* Abigail, who was the third daughter of Electa, Mary Lyon's oldest sister, was born in 1813, went to Ohio when the family moved there, and was visited in 1833 in Fredonia, New York, to which family center Mrs. Moore had returned after the death of her husband in 1824.

The letter goes on to tell of a visit to Abigail's older sister Lovinda, Mrs. Bedortha, in New Lebanon.

Her little Mary Lyon is a very sweet child, & besides is a very handsome baby. There is a solemnity in thus looking down on the third generation. O that that dear little one, & others of the same generation may be trained for the kingdom & service of Christ. . . .

South Hadley, Sep. 10. From the sadness of my heart, I must add a few lines this evening. Our dear Mr. Condit is very near his home in heaven. You have doubtless been informed of his feeble health the summer past. He has not been able to preach—has been to church but one half day for many months. . . . When I had visited at New Marlboro (*sic*), the plan was for Mr. Hawks to come & take me on an an excursion for about a week where he wished to look up some old subscriptions. On last Tues. morning he came bringing the sad intelligence that Mr. Condit was very low, not expected to live. In accordance with the feelings of us both we decided to turn our faces at once towards home. We arrived on Wed. morning. I have seen him twice since my return. The king of terrors is approaching with slow & gentle steps as if loth to take his prey, but he approaches nearer & nearer. He may live a day or two, & he may not live till morning. Here I am alone, in this great building, no one here to interrupt my sadness. I love ever this solitude for my tears & my prayers in his behalf. The past years of our acquaintance passed in rapid review before my mind. As I dwell on him as a friend a Christian, a counsellor, & pastor, sadness spreads a dark pall over my whole soul. And yet it is not all sadness. Heaven seems to be opening her gates in waiting readiness, to receive another servant of Christ, another redeemed soul, another glorified saint, into . . . blessed abode. Adieu for this eve.[18]

Mr. Condit died that week. The letters of the next few months comment often on the loss to herself and the church. The next long letter to Abigail, in April, 1848, has the cheerful conclusion, "My health is good." There follow several letters on school or personal

business—to Mrs. Banister, Mrs. Porter, Mrs. Safford, etc. On January 19, 1849, Miss Lyon writes from the Monson home of Mrs. Porter to Mrs. Banister:

I have been hesitating about the path of duty. But I need two or three days at home before the school begins, which I cannot have if I attempt to visit you. Without being in a hurry to do anything in particular, I am seeking for rest, which I need most of any thing. This I can best secure by remaining in this place. So I reluctantly give up the prospect of seeing you just at present, a prospect cherished more tenderly in the warmth of my heart than in my judgment. . . .[19]

On the same day she wrote to Rosina Lyon, the niece who had graduated from Mount Holyoke Seminary in 1848 and was now teaching. We quote the two opening paragraphs.

I trust you will not think me negligent though I have not written to you before. When I have a business letter and know that I need not add a single line to business in hand, I can catch a few moments and sit right down and write it. But when I think of writing a letter of friendship, I dislike to give the odds and ends of a tired out mind, and so I am inclined to delay along again and again.

I am now away from home. It is a long time indeed since I have had such a quiet resting place. Misses H. [Hazen] & J. [Jessup] proposed staying and taking care of things that I might leave. I decided to accept of their proposal. Miss F. [Foster?] aids in the domestic department. I left the greater part of things below with her. I arranged all, left written out the meals for each day, the baking, and the domestic work of each individual; & *left every thing behind me.* I received a letter from Miss H. last evening and all things were going on well.[20]

On January 22, 1849, she wrote from Monson to Miss Whitman, the associate on whom she depended so much, especially after Abigail Moore's departure. Miss Whitman had been away the previous term because of ill-health.

During two or three years past, I have been trying to mature in the literary department the changes which sprung up in the agitation of the waters on Miss Moore's leaving, and I have been trying to mature things, too, in the domestic department. I had every thing about ready for work this year, without much planning, or agitation, or change. Thus it has come out that that this has been the easiest year, in itself considered, we have almost ever had. You know the easy years come along now and then, and now and then the hard years. . . .[21]

It is a lovely picture that these letters give of this visit in Mrs. Porter's home, where she did this letter-writing to friends and nieces. A few sentences from a letter to Mrs. Burgess should be quoted, even though they repeat:

I am now enjoying an old-fashioned vacation of *real rest* in this sweetest of all resting-places. . . . My health has been unusually good this year, thus far. So unlike has it been to the winter after you left us, that I have great cause for gratitude. But at all times, whether I have more or less strength, I feel that I am fast hastening to my eternal home, my home of rest in the bosom of my God, I hope. Still, I trust, that I may have a little more work to do on earth, and that I may do it faithfully. . . .

My work is made up, as you know, of an endless number of duties, of nameless littlenesses, interwoven if not confused together. But still my work is a good work. . . .[22]

Within a week Miss Lyon is back at school, and on the fifteenth of February is writing Miss Whitman, still absent because of her health:

During the vacation, (in the autumn,) I thought I might meet you to journey together, or visit and read together, or both, somewhere among the mountains and in the quiet valleys of New England. So you see that I am calculating on quite a resting time next autumn myself.[23]

That is the last letter which we have from Miss Lyon's pen. She took a severe cold, but rose from her bed when it became evident that the illness of one of her seniors with erysipelas was likely to be fatal. She stayed with the girl until the end came, and returned to her room to receive word of the death of her nephew, William Putnam, who had committed suicide during a period of insanity. The shock of the two deaths at this time of her own depleted strength was too much. She died March 5, 1849, at the age of fifty-two. Her grave, shaded by tall trees, is in the heart of the campus of the college which she founded.

Text of Letter, between pages 216 and 217

South Hadley, Oct. 12, 1837.

My dear Miss Bailey,

I have received your letter. You can buy the cotton here for the comforter.

I regret that I cannot receive Miss Porrens [?], but I fear now that I have received more than I can accommodate.

If you come from Boston, you must stop at Belchertown 10 miles from S. Hadley. If you take a private conveyance from that place, they will charge you the enormous price of $2. The Lowell & Springfield Stage passes Belchertown about the time the Boston stage arrives. If you can get that, & stop at [Belchertown, *crossed off*] Granby, you can be brought 3 miles for 25 cts. On arriving at [Granbby, *crossed off;* Granby, *supra*] inquire of the keeper of the public house if arrangements have been made for carrying the scholars to the seminary at S. Hadley. A man very near the public house has engaged to carry our scholars for 25 cts.

Would you not like to come a little before the time so as to make the comforter? If so I think we shall get to keeping house in some style so that we shall have a place for you. If not, I will provide for you. Would you like to come [two whole, *crossed off*] so as to allow two whole days, to devote to my business. For the seminary, we shall have much sewing & many other things to do. If you can come, I shall be glad to have you, & share in this part of our benevolent work.

The Lowell & Springfield stage comes only on Tues. Thurs. & Saturday. Would you not do better to meet this stage, then to go to Boston? You will need a Commentary on the first of the New Testament.

Truly yours,

Mary Lyon.

Would you not do well to write to me again stating what day you will come, & how, as I might do something to aid in rescuing you from difficulty about the stage.

———————

Miss Hannah O. Bailey
Amesbury
Mass.

NOTES

To give a calendar of all the Mary Lyon letters, as they are preserved either in the original manuscript or in photostats or copies, is beyond the province of this book. The aim of these Notes is to furnish the necessary information concerning each letter used or referred to in the text, with such additional information as may be of interest to the student, indicating the sources of material. No effort has been made to list the material used in the preparation of this volume, the books, pamphlets, newspapers, and the innumerable manuscript letters and other data. In the text the manuscript letters are given as nearly as possible as in the originals, but there has been no effort to enter the words crossed out, or to indicate those written in above the lines, or in other details to reproduce as in facsimile the actual text. It has been felt that the editor's best service was to present the selected material in a form which would interest the general reader, while following accurately the final and intended version of each epistle.

Primary sources for letters and other data are, besides the manuscripts:

The Power of Christian Benevolence, Illustrated in the Life and Labors of Mary Lyon. Compiled by Edward Hitchcock, D.D., LL.D., President of Amherst College; with the Assistance of Others. Northampton: Hopkins, Bridgman, and Company, 1851.

This book, by usage of custom, is referred to throughout either as the Memoir, or the Hitchcock volume.

The Power of Christian Benevolence, Illustrated in the Life and Labors of Mary Lyon. A new edition, abridged and in some parts enlarged. Published by the American Tract Society, 1858.

This smaller volume, containing some new material, but with many omissions, is referred to throughout as the *Cowles edition,* since it is known to have been edited by Mrs. Eunice Caldwell Cowles and her associates. Manuscript notes exist in the archives of Mount Holyoke

College showing both these volumes in the course of preparation, with portions of letters bracketed where they are to be omitted.

Recollections of Mary Lyon, with Selections from Her Instructions to the Pupils in Mt. Holyoke Female Seminary, by Fidelia Fisk. American Tract Society, 1866.

The Use of a Life: Memorials of Mrs. Z. P. Grant Banister. (L. T. Guilford, compiler). American Tract Society, 1885.

The abbreviation Mss. indicates that a manuscript copy of the letter is the source, not the printed volumes. Such manuscript letters are in the main in the archives of Mount Holyoke College; if not, they are represented there by photostatic copies or by hand-written or typed copies from known private sources.

Illustrations are from manuscript letters photographed through the courtesy of the Williston Memorial Library, Mount Holyoke College, and from photographs loaned from the college office. The term "archives, Mount Holyoke College" or "M.H.C." refers to the archives of the Williston Memorial Library, South Hadley, Massachusetts. Information concerning Mary Lyon manuscripts not listed in these archives will be welcomed by the librarian.

CHAPTER BY CHAPTER

Figures listed in the Notes correspond with those inserted in the body of the text, chapter by chapter. References cannot give full authority, but guide the student to sources for further research.

The dedication is quoted from the "Litany for a New Century," used at the Convocation, September 23, 1937, marking the opening of the second century of the college and the inauguration of Roswell Gray Ham as its president.

Pages 1-6

The Letters

1. Memoir, p. 13.

2. Letter to Polly Newhall, Conway, April 7, 1818. Typed copy, archives, Mount Holyoke College.
3. Memoir, see description above.
4. Memoir, p. 325.
5. Memoir, p. 432.

Pages 9-14

I. Mary Lyon's Family
1. *A Missionary Offering,* Boston, 1843.
2. *Ibid;* also, Memoir, p. 3 ff., abridged.
3. *Recollections of Mary Lyon, . . . ,* by Fidelia Fisk.
4. *Ibid,* pp. 23-25, abridged.
5. *Ibid,* p. 36.
6. *Ibid,* p. 31.

Pages 15-20

II. At Sanderson Academy
1. Memoir, p. 26.
2. Memoir, p. 59.
3. F. G. Howes, *Historical Address, Sanderson Academy,* 1889.
4. Memoir, p. 410.
5. Elijah Burritt was the oldest brother of Elihu Burritt, the "Learned Blacksmith" of Connecticut. He returned to his native town, New Britain, Connecticut, to establish a high school far in advance of the ordinary standards of the time. A letter written by him on August 3, 1832 to Miss Lyon is preserved in the Mount Holyoke College archives.
6. Fisk, p. 38; Memoir, p. 12. Best told in *The Life of Mary Lyon* by Beth Bradford Gilchrist, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1910. The recollections of Miss Lyon by the White family were obtained by Miss Gilchrist and are deposited in the Mount Holyoke College archives.
7. Memoir, p. 261.
8. Memoir, p. 53.
9. M. H. C. archives. *See also* Memoir, p. 258 and p. 411.

10. Memoir, p. 15.
11. Fisk, p. 39.
12. Memoir, p. 15.

Pages 21-24

III. Out into the World
1. *Amherst Academy, a New England School of the Past,* 1814-1861. Frederick Tuckerman, 1929. Page 15.
2. *Noah Webster, The Schoolmaster of America,* Harry R. Warfel. New York, 1936.
3. See 1.
4. Tuckerman, pp. 66-68.
5. Tuckerman, p. 15.
6. Fisk, p. 41.
7. Tuckerman, p. 67; Fisk, p. 40.
8. Letter of Miss Grant to Miss Lyon, Jan., 1830. M. H. C. archives.

Pages 25-27

IV. Joseph Emerson and "Female Education"
1. Boston, 1822.
2. *Emma Willard,* A. Lutz. Boston, 1929.
3. *Life of Joseph Emerson,* Ralph Emerson. Boston, 1834.
4. *Bradford, A New England Academy,* J. S. Pond. 1930.

Pages 28-31

V. Zilpah Polly Grant
1. *The Use of a Life,* compiled by L. T. Guilford. N. Y. 1885.
2. Memoir, p. 9; Fisk, pp. 32-34.
3. *Use of a Life,* pp. 29-30. Rev. Ralph Emerson went to Andover, where he was in frequent contact with Miss Grant and Miss Lyon.

Pages 32-37

VI. Mary and Amanda at Byfield
1. Fisk, p. 45.
2. M. H. C. archives.
3. *Use of a Life,* p. 34.

4. *Life of Joseph Emerson,* p. 250.
5. Memoir, p. 16.
6. *Ibid.*
7. Letter to Rosina, July 30, 1821. Byfield. Memoir, p. 21.
8. Letter to her mother, May 13, 1821. Byfield. Memoir, p. 18.
9. Memoir, p. 16.
10. Memoir, p. 13.
11. Letter to her mother, July 21, 1821. Byfield. Memoir, p. 19.
12. Memoir, p. 33.
13. *Life of Joseph Emerson.*
14. Letter to Freelove, August 11, 1821. Byfield. Memoir, p. 22.
15. M. H. C. archives.

Pages 41-45

VII. Their First Attempt

1. *Use of a Life,* p. 50-51.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid,* pp. 53-55, ff; mss records in M. H. C. archives.
4. Letter to Miss Grant, Dec. 1, 1823. Ashfield. Memoir, p. 25.
5. Letter to Miss Grant, Dec. 30, 1823. Memoir, p. 27.
6. *Use of a Life,* pp. 57-62.
7. *History of Londonderry,* E. L. Parker. 1851. p. 119.

Pages 46-51

VIII. Letters Tell of Adams Academy

1. Letter to her mother, June 5, 1824. Londonderry. Memoir, p. 29.
2. *Use of a Life,* p. 66.
3. M. H. C. archives.
4. Letter to Hannah White, July 2, 1824. Memoir, p. 30.
5. Letter to Amanda White, Sept. 26, 1824. Memoir, p. 33.
6. *Use of a Life,* p. 72.
7. Letter to Mrs. Pettibone, June 24, 1825. Mss., M. H. C. archives. (Mrs. Pettibone was Miss Grant's sister-in-law.)

8. *Use of a Life,* p. 73.
9. *The Congregationalist,* March 12, 1874.

Pages 52-56

IX. Science with Professor Eaton

1. Letter to Miss Grant, April 1, 1825. Troy, N. Y. Memoir, p. 41.
2. Baker, R. P. *A Chapter in American Education.* New York. 1924. Ricketts, Palmer C. *History of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute,* 1824-1894. New York. 1895.
3. Baker, p. 12 ff.
4. *Ibid.*
5. In his final analysis of Miss Lyon's character, Dr. Hitchcock speaks of her power of attention to details. "Especially was this indispensable when she engaged in the manipulations of a chemical laboratory. In these she was very successful—a thing impossible without scrupulous attention to every item of preparation." Memoir, p. 442.
6. Same as 2.
7. Circular, M. H. C. archives.
8. See Chap. IV:2.
9. A Rensselaer circular of 1826 describes the subject matter covered in a chemistry course as follows: "For *summer.* Experimenting upon the most common gases, as oxygen (obtained from vegetables by the action of light), nitrogen, hydrogen, carbonic acid (with its combination in soda water), testing their specific gravities, etc. and experimenting upon aqueous exhalations—all to be performed with apparatus made with their own hands. For *winter.* Making and using galvanic batteries and piles, electrometers, and magnets; and disengaging combined caloric by compression and affinity." In an addendum to the circular issued October 29, 1828, appears *"Notice by A. Eaton, in his private capacity.* At the urgent solicitation of several judicious friends, a lady, well qualified for the duty, will take charge of two

experimental courses in chemistry and natural philosophy, in each year for ladies: similar to the courses proposed for gentlemen in the annexed circular. They will be nine-week courses, at the same times and for the same charges. But no extemporaneous lectures will be required, excepting of those ladies who wish to prepare for giving instruction." At the end of a printed synopsis of a mathematics course which he gave in 1834-5, Eaton remarks: "The waste of time in many female schools, by the fashionable mummery of algebra, half learned and never applied, has caused many to ascribe the failure in mathematics to the perversion of female genius, when it is drawn from elegant literature, music, painting, etc., to the severe sciences. The true cause is to be found in parsimony, which excludes competent teachers, badly selected subjects, and wretchedly compiled textbooks."

Pages 57-62

X. Her Own Winter Schools for Girls

1. M. H. C. archives.
2. Letter to Miss Grant, Dec. 13, 1824. Buckland. Memoir, p. 39.
3. Letter to Miss Hannah Chickering, Feb. 21, 1825. Buckland. Memoir, p. 40.
4. Letter to Miss Sarah Gillett, Jan. 21, 1825. Buckland. Mss. M. H. C. archives.
5. Letter to Miss Grant, Dec. 26, 1825. Buckland. Memoir, p. 44.
6. Letter to her mother, June 5, 1824. Londonderry. Memoir, p. 29.
7. Letter to her mother, September 25, 1825. Londonderry. Memoir, p. 44.
8. Same as 5.
9. See *History of Amherst College,* William S. Tyler.
10. Letter to Mrs. Amanda White Ferry, Feb. 20, 1826. Buckland. Memoir, p. 46.
11. Fisk, p. 69.
12. First normal school in Massachusetts, 1839.

Pages 63-74

XI. The Next Step

1. Letter to her mother, May 20, 1826. Londonderry. Memoir, p. 46.
2. Letter to Freelove, July 4, 1826. Londonderry. Memoir, p. 48.
3. Letter to Freelove, July 30, 1826. Londonderry. Memoir, p. 49.
4. M. H. C. archives.
5. *Use of a Life,* p. 81.
6. The monitorial system, here described, bore the name of Joseph Lancaster, who was moved to its adoption in England by the need of large free schools for more teachers.
7. Letter to Freelove, Oct. 25, 1826. Londonderry. Memoir, p. 50.
8. Hannah Chickering, of Saugus and Derry days, married February 2, 1826, Dr. John Kingsbury Briggs of Dedham. Their home became a second home to Miss Grant, and Miss Lyon visited there often and wrote intimate notes to Mrs. Briggs.
9. Letter of Miss Grant, Feb. 29, *Use of a Life,* p. 82.
10. Letter to Miss Grant, Feb. 28, 1827. Ashfield. Memoir, p. 52.
11. Letter to Miss Grant, Mar. 13, 1827. Ashfield. Memoir, p. 53.
12. *Use of a Life,* p. 83.
13. Letter to Freelove, Aug. 22, 1827. Derry. Memoir, p. 53.
14. *Use of a Life,* p. 85.
15. *Ibid,* p. 85-6
16. *Ibid,* p. 87.
17. Letter to Miss Grant, Nov. 26, 1827. Ashfield. Memoir, p. 54.
18. Letter to Miss Grant, Dec. 26, 1827. Ashfield. Memoir, p. 56.
19. Letter to Miss Grant, Dec. 28, 1827. Ashfield. Memoir, p. 57.

20. *Use of a Life,* p. 89.
21. *Ibid,* p. 91.
22. Mss. "Facts respecting Ipswich & Derry Schools," Mrs. Eunice (Caldwell) Cowles. M. H. C. archives.
23. Letter to Miss Grant, Jan. 19, 1828. Ashfield. Memoir, p. 59.

Pages 75-81

XII. Her First Revivals

1. *Letters of an English Traveller to his Friend in England on the "Revivals of Religion in America."* Boston, 1828.
2. Letter to Freelove, October 25, 1826. Londonderry. Memoir, p. 50.
3. Letter to Miss Grant, January 6, 1828. Ashfield. Memoir, p. 58.
4. Letter to Miss Grant, February 25, 1828. Ashfield. Memoir, p. 60.
5. Letter to Miss Grant, March 18, 1828. Ashfield. Memoir, p. 61.
6. *Autobiography, Correspondence, etc. of Lyman Beecher D.D.* New York. 1864. Vol. II, p. 63.

Pages 82-95

XIII. The Ipswich Years

1. Letter of Nov. 16, 1836 (Mss. M. H. C. archives); of Sept. 6, 1837, Memoir, p. 241, etc.
2. Letter to Miss Grant, Sept. 15, 1834. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 122.
3. Mss. Letter, M. H. C. archives.
4. Dr. Beecher was instrumental in bringing Lowell Mason to Boston, where he presided over the choirs of the Hanover and Bowdoin St. churches.
5. Letter to Miss Grant, January 29, 1832. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 81.
6. Letter to Miss Hannah White, April 24, 1829. Ipswich. Mss. M. H. C. archives.

7. Fisk, p. 82; also mss. in M. H. C. archives.
8. *Use of a Life,* p. 65.
9. See *Our Honored Seminary* by Lydia A. Caldwell, a paper read before the Woman's Club of Ipswich on the 75th anniversary of the coming of Miss Grant and Miss Lyon to Ipswich, for description of the school building, the home where Miss Lyon first lived, etc. Letter to Maj. Joseph Griswold, Sept. 4, 1830. Mss. M. H. C. archives.
10. Regulations at Ipswich Seminary. Mss. M. H. C. archives.
11. M. H. C. Archives.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Use of a Life,* p. 94.
14. Letter to Miss Grant, Feb. 2, 1829. Buckland. Memoir, p. 68.
15. Letter to Miss Grant, July, 1832. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 83.
16. Letter to Miss Grant, December 28, 1831. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 81.
17. Letter to Miss Grant, March 18, 1832. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 82.
18. Letter to Miss Grant, July 10, 1833. Philadelphia. Memoir, p. 96.
19. Letter to Miss Grant, Sept. 18, 1833. Detroit. Memoir, p. 107.
20. Draught of letter to Miss Cole, March 20, 1830. Ashfield. Mss. M. H. C. archives.
21. Letter to Miss Grant, Sept. 15, 1832. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 85.
22. Letter to Miss Grant, Oct. 6, 1832. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 86. See also letters relating to Putnam illness, Nov. 28, 1828, Memoir, p. 66; Feb. 2, 1829, Memoir, p. 68.
23. Letter to Maj. Joseph Griswold, Sept. 4, 1830. Ipswich. M.H.C. archives.
24. Letter to A. (Abigail Moore), 1832. Ipswich, Memoir, p. 91.
25. Letter to Miss Grant, Nov. 9, 1832. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 87.

26. M. H. C. archives.

Pages 99-103

XIV. The First Appeal for Endowment

1. Letter to Miss Grant, Nov. 18, 1829. Buckland. Memoir, p. 74.
2. Letter to Miss Grant, Nov. 30, 1829. Buckland. Memoir, p. 74.
3. Letter to Miss Grant, Dec. 9, 1829. Buckland. Memoir, p. 130.
4. Mss. M. H. C. archives.
5. *Use of a Life,* p. 150.
6. *Ibid,* pp. 141-149. Also mss. M. H. C. archives.
7. Memoir, p. 159 ff.; also M. H. C. archives.
8. *Use of a Life,* p. 156.

Pages 104-112

XV. Miss Lyon Takes a Hand

1. Letter to Prof. Hitchcock, Feb. 4, 1832. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 160.
2. Memoir, pp. 164-167. Also, M. H. C. archives.
3. For Dr. Heman Humphrey, see Fuess' *Amherst College,* Ch. IX.
4. Letter to Miss Grant, Nov. 29, 1832. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 87.
5. Letter to Rev. Heman Humphrey, January 14, 1833. Ipswich. M. H. C. archives.
6. Letter to Miss Grant, Dec. 9, 1832. Memoir, p. 168.
7. Letter to Miss Grant, Jan. 10, 1833. Memoir, p. 170.
8. *Ibid.*
9. Letter to Miss Grant, Jan. 12, 1833. Memoir, p. 171.
10. Letter to Miss Grant, February 4, 1833. Boston. Memoir, p. 171.
11. Draft of letter to Mr. Crosby, winter of 1833. Mss. M. H. C. archives.
12. Same as 10.
13. Letter to Miss Grant, Feb. 13, 1833. Memoir, p. 172.
14. Letter to Miss Grant, Feb. 24, 1833. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 174.

15. Letter to Miss Grant, April 6, 1833. Memoir, p. 183.
16. Memoir, p. 181-186.
17. Letter to Mrs. Hannah Chickering Briggs, May 14, 1833. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 95.

Pages 113-126

XVI. Her Westward Journey

1. Memoir, p. 31.
2. Rev. and Mrs. William Montague Ferry continued twelve years in this outpost. They then went south to Grand Haven, Michigan, settling where they were forty miles from their nearest white neighbors. He went into business and prospered, becoming a rich man. There were seven children, six of whom survived him as did his wife. His continuing educational interest is shown by a bequest of $20,000 to Lake Forest University and $15,000 towards the erection of a Female Seminary at Lake Forest. See Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections, Vol. VI, p. 391 ff.
3. Letter to Rosina, March 9, 1830. Buckland. Memoir, p. 76.
4. *Catharine Esther Beecher,* Mae Elizabeth Harveson. Philadelphia, 1932. Also, *Autobiography of Lyman Beecher,* Vol. II; 224.
5. Rev. Charles C. Beatty and his wife founded the Steubenville Female Seminary on April 13, 1829, according to an article on "The Higher Education of Women in the Ohio Valley previous to 1840" by Jane Sherzer (Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly, Jan., 1916). The announcement of the school described a large, imposing main edifice, contiguous buildings 165 feet in length with 50 lodging rooms, and set forth an ambitious curriculum, at $35.00 per quarter for tuition. From 1833 on Miss Lyon was writing him about teachers she might send in response to his requests.
6. M. H. C. archives.
7. Letter to Miss Grant, July 10, 1833. Philadelphia. Memoir, p. 97.

8. Letter to Miss Grant, August 8, 1833. Catskill Mountain. Memoir, p. 101.
9. Anne Royall, *The Black Book*, 1828, p. 37.
10. *Two Years' Residence in the New Settlements of Ohio, North America.* D. Griffiths. London, 1835.
We should remember that Rochester was not first settled until 1812, and Buffalo in 1804 (but burned by the British in 1813); and that the Erie Canal was opened in 1825.
11. Rev. George W. Gale was at this time raising money in this part of New York for the founding of Knox College by purchase of land therefor in Illinois. His "plan" included a "Young Ladies' Seminary," experiment having already proved that "manual labor" could be successfully introduced into such a seminary, being conducive to health and piety as well as reducing expense.
12. Letter to Miss Grant, August 31, 1833. Buffalo. Memoir, pp. 102-104.
13. Letter to Miss Grant, Sept. 4, 1833. Fredonia. Memoir, p. 104.
14. Letter to Miss Grant, Sept. 10, 1833. Fredonia. Memoir, p. 105.
15. Letter to Miss Grant, Sept. 18, 1833. Detroit. Memoir, p. 106. By a letter of Sept. 16, she had stopped at Madison, Ohio, to visit an uncle by marriage.
16. From Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections, Vol. 35; 248-258. "Autobiography of an Octogenarian," Emily Virginia Mason.
17. "Traditions and Reminiscences of the Public Schools of Detroit," by William D. Wilkins. Michigan P. and H. Collections, Vol. I: 448 ff. Also, *Education in Michigan during the Territorial Period,* Lucy M. Salmon.
18. *Gazetteer of the State of Michigan, 1838,* John T. Blois. P. 146.
19. Memoir, p. 123.
20. Letter to Gentleman at Andover, July 5, 1834. Memoir, p. 195. In connection with this Andover letter, it

should be said that Miss Lyon was urged to take charge of Abbot Academy, recently started there, but declined as she felt she could not take on another such school but must press on for her ideal seminary on permanent foundations.

Pages 127-138

XVII. Mary Lyon's Own Solution

1. Letter of Catharine Beecher, July 10, (1830?). Mss. M.H.C. archives.
2. Letter to Miss Grant, March 1, 1833. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 181.
3. Letter to Miss Hannah White, Feb. 26, 1834. Ipswich. Mss. M.H.C. archives. Memoir, p. 186.
4. Letter to Miss Grant, Feb. 24, 1833. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 175.
5. M.H.C. archives. Memoir, p. 187-189.
6. Letter to Thomas White, March 5, 1834. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 189.
7. Letter to her mother, May 12, 1834. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 190.
8. Letter to Mrs. O. Hitchcock, July 7, 1834. Ipswich. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
9. Letter to Freelove, Aug. 26, 1834. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 120.

Pages 139-144

XVIII. Letters by the Way

1. Letter to her mother, Sept. 25, 1825. Londonderry. Memoir, p. 43.
2. Letter to her mother, May 13, 1834. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 115.
3. Letter to Miss Grant, Dec. 23, 1835. Amherst. Memoir, p. 219.
4. Letter to Miss Brigham, August 25, 1834. Ipswich. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
5. See page 152.
6. Letter to Miss Grant, Oct. 24, 1831. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 79.

7. Letter to Miss Hannah White, May 23, 1833. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 95.
8. Letter to Miss Grant, June 5, 1834. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 117.
9. Letter to Miss Grant, July 4, 1834. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 119.

Pages 147-150

XIX. The Parlor Meeting

1. Dr. Packard had been trustee of Williams College and of Amherst College. Mr. Fuess speaks of him as the "eloquent and metaphysical Dr. Theophilus Packard, commonly called the "Sage of Shelburne."
2. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
3. Cowles, p. 159.
4. Letter of Sept. 8, 1834. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 201.
5. Notebook, M.H.C. archives.
6. *Twenty-fifth Anniversary of Mt. Holyoke Female Seminary.* 1862. P. 80.

Pages 151-154

XX. Miss Lyon Raises the First Thousand Dollars

1. Memoir, p. 201.
2. Cowles, p. 161.
3. Letter to Miss Susan and Miss Sarah Brigham, Sept. 22, 1834. Taunton. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
4. Letter to Miss Grant, Oct. 7, 1834. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 203.

Pages 155-162

XXI. Men and Milestones

1. Students' Notes. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Letter to Miss Grant, Dec., 1834. Memoir, p. 132.
4. Memoir, p. 204.
5. Same as 3.
6. Memoir, p. 209.
7. *History of Mount Holyoke Seminary . . . 1837-1887,* Sarah D. (Locke) Stow. P. 51.

8. *Ibid,* p. 52.
9. *Ibid.*
10. Letter to Miss Grant, January 9, 1835. Worcester. Memoir, p. 205.
11. Trustees' records, notebook, M.H.C. archives.
12. Letter to Rev. Edward Hitchcock, Jan. 29, 1835. Amherst. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
13. M.H.C. archives.

Pages 163-164

XXII. The Name

1. Letter to her mother, April 2, 1835. Amherst. Memoir, p. 207.
2. Memoir, p. 206.
3. Letter to Miss Grant, winter of 1835. Memoir, p. 207.
4. Stow, p. 49.

Pages 165-174

XXIII. The Wheaton Interlude

1. *The Life of Eliza Baylies Wheaton.* H. E. Paine. Cambridge. 1907.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Wheaton Seminary: A Semi-Centennial Sketch,* Lucy Larcom. Cambridge. 1885.
4. Letter to Mr. Wheaton, July 8, 1834. Ipswich. Mss.
5. Letter to Mr. Wheaton, Dec. 23, 1834. Amherst. Mss.
6. Letter to Mr. and Mrs. Wheaton, Feb. 25, 1835. Ipswich. Also, Letter to Mr. and Mrs. Wheaton, March 4, 1835. Ipswich. Mss. (Originals of all Wheaton letters are in the Wheaton College archives, Norton, Mass.; photostats in the Mount Holyoke College archives.) One other undated letter invites Mr. and Mrs. Wheaton to one of the anniversaries at Mount Holyoke Seminary.
7. Larcom, *Wheaton Seminary.*
8. *History of Abbot Academy.* McKeen, Philena and McKeen, Phebe M., Andover, 1880. Abbot Academy was opened in 1829. When Mary Lyon put out in the autumn of 1834 her paper to the "Friends of Female Education," with a list of the necessities of her "sys-

tem," the trustees of Abbot responded Dec. 15, 1834, offering to change in any way needed to meet these views.

9. Letter to Miss Grant, May 19, 1835. Norton. Memoir, p. 210.
10. Mss. Wheaton College archives.
11. Larcom.
12. Larcom.

Pages 175-191

XXIV. A Hard Year

1. Letter to Miss Grant, April 8, 1835. Amherst. Memoir, p. 209.
2. M.H.C. archives. See also Memoir, p. 212.
3. Letter to Miss Grant, June 29, 1835. Memoir, p. 213.
4. Memoir, p. 226. See also Chap. XXV, note 3.
5. Letter to Miss Grant, March 1, 1833. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 178.
6. Memoir, p. 243.
7. Memoir, p. 244.
8. Letter to her mother and sister, July 23, 1835. Northampton. Memoir, p. 214.
9. Hamilton College, *Historical Discourse,* 1862. P. 23ff.
10. Letter to Miss Grant, October 1, 1835. South Hadley Canal. Memoir, p. 216.
11. Letter to her sister, October 24, 1835. Norton. Memoir, p. 218.
12. Letter to Miss Grant, Oct. 27, 1835. Memoir, p. 218.
13. Letter to Miss Caldwell, Jan. 11, 1836. Memoir, p. 222. For Mr. Avery see also *History of Conway, Mass.,* Charles S. Pease.
14. Memoir, p. 223.
15. M.H.C. archives.
16. Cowles, p. 173.
17. Mss., copies in M.H.C. archives.
18. Letter to Mary, Catherine, Edward Hitchcock, Feb. 8, 1836. Ipswich. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
19. Letter, April 25, 1836. Memoir, p. 223.
20. Mss. M.H.C. archives.

21. *A Memoir of Daniel Safford,* by his wife. Boston, 1861.
22. Stow, p. 50.
23. *Memoir of Daniel Safford,* p. 325.
24. Letter to Miss Caldwell, May 24, 1836. Memoir, p. 224.

Pages 192-199

XXV. The Beecher Correspondence

1. *Catharine Esther Beecher, Pioneer Educator,* Mae Elizabeth Harveson. Philadelphia. 1932. From this thesis the reader may be guided to the abundant Beecher material in recent and older volumes, each contributing something to the family picture.
2. *Ibid,* p. 33.
3. Letter of Miss Beecher to Miss Lyon, June, 1836. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
4. M.H.C. archives.
5. Letter to Miss C. E. Beecher, July 1, 1836. Memoir, p. 225.

Pages 200-205

XXVI. The Corner Stone Laid

1. Letter to Miss Grant, July 7, 1836. Memoir, p. 230.
2. Letter to Miss Grant, July 18, 1836. Norton. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
3. Memoir, p. 288.
4. Letter to Miss Grant, Sept. 6, 1836. Memoir, p. 230.
5. M.H.C. archives. See also Stow, p. 61.
6. Letter to Mr. Heard, Sept. 21, 1836. South Hadley. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
7. Letter to Miss Grant, Oct. 9, 1836. South Hadley. Mss. M.H.C. archives.

Pages 206-208

XXVII. The Meeting in Deacon Safford's Parlor

1. Letter to Miss Grant, Nov. 16, 1836. Granby. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
2. Letter to Mr. Heard, Nov. 12, 1836. South Hadley. Mss. M.H.C. archives.

3. Letter to Miss Grant, Mar. 12, 1836. Boston. Mss. M.H.C. archives.

Pages 209-216

XXVIII. Towards the Great Day

1. M.H.C. archives. See also Memoir, p. 232.
2. Letter to Mrs. Nutman, April 17, 1837. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
3. Letter to Abigail Moore, June 26, 1837. Enfield. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
4. Letter to Mrs. Pamela Burr, Aug. 10, 1837. South Hadley. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
5. See also Letter to Miss Hannah O. Bailey, Sept. 16, 1837. South Hadley. Mss. M.H.C. archives. (*Facsimile*).
6. Letter to her mother, Sept. 6, 1837. South Hadley. Memoir, p. 242.
7. Letter to Miss Grant, Sept. 14, 1837. South Hadley. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
8. Letter to Mr. David Choate, Sept. 21 and 26. South Hadley and Boston. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
9. Letter to Miss Nancy Everett, Sept. 30, 1837. Mss., copy M.H.C. archives.

Pages 217-218

XXIX. The Seminary Opens

1. Reminiscences, collected by Mrs. Stow and on file in the Mount Holyoke College archives. For the story of this day, see also Stow, p. 86 ff.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Stow, p. 90.

Pages 221-238

XXX. The Domestic System

1. Letter to Miss Hannah White, Aug. 1, 1834. Ipswich. Memoir, p. 197.
2. *Use of a Life,* p. 180.
3. The story of the Oberlin experiment is told in the early histories of Oberlin College, by James H. Fairchild and others. A circular of 1834 states that "male students are

to be employed in agriculture, gardening, and some of the mechanic arts; females in housekeeping, useful needle-work, the manufacture of wool, the culture of silk, certain appropriate parts of gardening, etc."

4. Letter to Miss Grant, Dec. 1, 1837. South Hadley. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
5. In order to save Miss Peters from any financial loss, Miss Lyon paid the balance of her year's salary out of her own pocket.
6. Letter to Rev. Theron Baldwin, July 12, 1838. South Hadley. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
7. Letters and journals, filed by names and dates, M.H.C. archives.
8. Memoir, p. 318.
9. Memoir, p. 298, abridged.
10. Letter to Abigail Moore, ?. Worcester. Mss. M.H.C. archives.

Pages 239-246

XXXI. In the First Years

1. Cowles, p. 205.
2. Letter to Mr. Baldwin, see Chap. XXX, note 6.
3. Mount Holyoke College archives.
4. Typed copy of Goodale letters, M.H.C. archives.
5. The dedication was held in the spring of 1838.
6. Letter to Mr. and Mrs. Heard, August 7, 1838. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
7. Stow, p. 101.
8. Letter to Miss Grant, Aug. 27, 1838. South Hadley. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
9. Cowles, p. 207.
10. Memoir, p. 311.

Pages 247-252

XXXII. Personal Letters

1. Letter to Miss Grant, April 23, 1838. South Hadley. Mss. M.H.C. archives, typewritten copy of fragment, dated April 3. Memoir, p. 390.

2. Letter, Feb. 18, 1839—fragment. South Hadley. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
3. Letter, March 27, 1839—fragment. Typewritten copy, M.H.C. archives.
4. Letter to Miss Grant, April 12, 1839. South Hadley. Memoir, p. 387.
5. Letter to Miss Grant, Aug. 18, 1841. South Hadley. Memoir, p. 395.
6. Letter to Rev. Dr. Anderson, Nov. 5, 1840. South Hadley. Mss. American Board Collections, Andover-Harvard Library, Cambridge.

Pages 253-261

XXXIII. School Correspondence

1. Letter to Miss Martha M. Green, February 25, 1839. South Hadley. Mss. typewritten copy, M.H.C. archives.
2. Same as above, date, March 27, 1839.
3. Letter to Miss Lucy Hodges, March 9, 1839. South Hadley. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
4. M.H.C. archives.
5. Letter to Rev. William A. Hallock, March 2, 1841. South Hadley. Mss. M.H.C. archives. (Mr. Hallock was connected with the American Tract Society.)
6. M.H.C. archives.
7. Letter to Mr. and Mrs. Heard, Dec. 3, 1841. South Hadley. Mss. M.H.C. archives
8. Letter to Rev. Dr. Anderson, March 11, 1842. South Hadley. Mss. American Board Collections, Andover-Harvard Library, Cambridge.

Pages 262-274

XXXIV. The Revival of 1843

1. Fisk, p. 159.
2. See *The Story of the American Board,* William E. Strong. Boston, 1910.
3. See *Memoir of Daniel Safford,* cited above, and *Life of Edward Norris Kirk,* David O. Mears. Boston 1877.
4. Fisk, p. 170.

5. *A History of American Revivals,* Frank G. Beardsley. New York. 1904.
6. Letter to Mrs. Banister, December, 1842. South Hadley. Memoir, p. 395.
7. Mrs. Stow tells the story of the request for two teachers for the girls' school in Oroomiah, Persia, and of Miss Lyon's asking that any considering the question write a note. Within an hour forty notes were in Miss Lyon's hand, the shortest: "If counted worthy, I should be willing to go.—Fidelia Fisk." Stow, p. 163.
8. Fisk, p. 180.
9. Letter to Mrs. Banister, March 8, 1843. Memoir, p. 338.
10. Letter to Mrs. Safford, March 9, 1843. Memoir, p. 330.
11. Letter to Mr. Safford, March 17, 1843. Memoir, p. 334.
12. Letter to Mrs. Safford, March 21, 1843. Memoir, p. 335.
13. Letter to Mrs. Banister, April 13, 1843. Memoir, p. 343.
14. Memoir, p. 324.
15. Letter to Miss Fisk, March 4, 1844. South Hadley. Memoir, p. 350.
16. Quote from letter of May 16, 1843, to Rev. Dr. Anderson, American Board Collections.
17. Quote from letter of May 25, 1843, *ibid.* Manuscripts of the *Missionary Offering,* much rewritten in an effort to abridge are in the Mount Holyoke College archives.

    [The two spellings *Fisk* and *Fiske* are used for this family. We have chosen the former as it appears on Miss Fisk's book.]

Pages 275-287

XXXV. In the Last Years

1. Memoir, p. 453.
2. *American Annals of Education,* August, 1833.
3. Memoir, p. 76.
4. *True Remedy for the Wrongs of Women,* C. E. Beecher, p. 101.
5. See Harveson, above cited.
6. *Educational Reminiscences and Suggestions,* Catharine E. Beecher, 1874. Pp. 97-99.

7. Letters in American Board Collections, Andover-Harvard Library, Cambridge.
8. Letter to Mr. Allen Henry Brown, Nov. 8, 1847. South Hadley. Mss., typewritten copy, M.H.C. archives.
9. Letter to Mrs. Safford, Sept. 26, 1843. South Hadley. Memoir, p. 389.
10. Letter to Mrs. Banister, July 23, 1845. South Hadley. Memoir, p. 398.
11. Letter to Miss Lydia Abbot, Sept. 1, 1845. Middlebury. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
12. Letter to Abigail Moore, August 24, 1846. South Hadley. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
13. The first wife of Rev. Ebenezer Burgess was Mary Grant of Colebrook, Connecticut, niece of Miss Grant. A letter of Miss Lyon's, December, 1842, expresses sympathy over the death of this niece, whom she had known from childhood, and who had studied with her at Buckland and assisted at Ipswich.
14. Letter to Mrs. Banister, Nov. 27, 1846. Memoir, p. 399.
15. Letter to Susan (Mrs. Howland), April 19, 1847. Monson. Mss. M.H.C. archives. This is Susan Reed of the class of 1839, who married Rev. William W. Howland and went to Ceylon.
16. Letter to Mrs. Burgess, April 19, 1847. Monson. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
17. Letter to Misses Tolman and Scott, 1847. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
18. Letter to Mrs. Burgess, Aug. 10, 1847. Somers, Conn. Mss. M.H.C. archives. This letter is written from the home of the Chapin family. Martha, of the class of 1842, left the seminary in 1846, after four years of teaching there, to marry Rev. Allen Hazen and go to India. Her absence is mentioned at the opening of this long letter, as is the prospective return of Mary, of the class of 1843, who was to succeed Miss Lyon as principal of Mount Holyoke Seminary.
19. Letter to Mrs. Banister, Jan. 19, 1849. Monson. Memoir, p. 402.

20. Letter to Rosina, Jan. 19, 1849. Monson. Mss., M.H.C. archives. The references are to Miss Sophia D. Hazen, class of 1841, who taught at the seminary 1841-1850, Miss Emily Jessup, class of 1847, also teaching.
21. Letter to Miss Mary C. Whitman, Jan 22, 1849. Memoir, p. 402.
22. Letter to Mrs. Burgess, Jan. 22, 1849. Mss. M.H.C. archives.
23. Letter to Miss Whitman, Feb. 15, 1849. Memoir, p. 408.

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